The Arts of the Church

Church Embroidery

By Alice Dryden

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Edited by the
REV. PERCY DEARMER, D.D.

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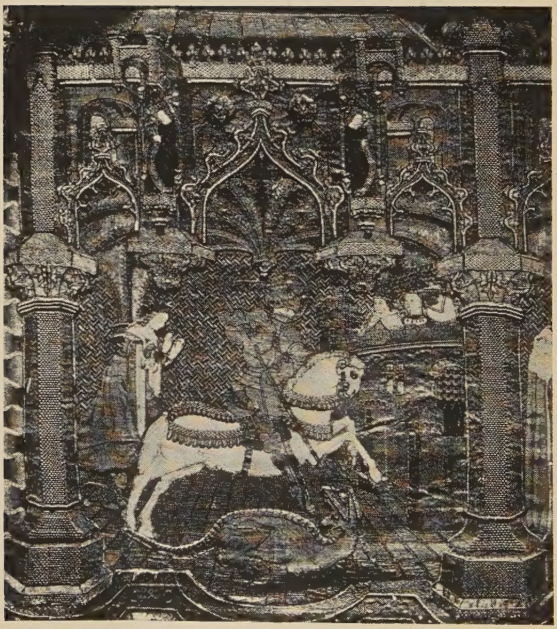

PANEL OF ALTAR FRONTAL. (See page xiii.)

The Arts of the Church

CHURCH EMBROIDERY

BY

ALICE DRYDEN

WITH TWENTY-EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS AND THIRTEEN FIGURES IN TEXT

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EDITOR'S NOTE

THE little volumes in the ARTS OF THE CHURCH series are intended to provide information in an interesting as well as an accurate form about the various arts which have clustered round the public worship of God in the Church of Christ. Though few have the opportunity of knowing much about them, there are many who would like to possess the main outlines about those arts whose productions are so familiar to the Christian, and so dear. The authors will write for the average intelligent man who has not had the time to study all these matters for himself; and they will therefore avoid technicalities, while endeavouring at the same time to present the facts with a fidelity which will not, it is hoped, be unacceptable to the specialist.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

TECHNICAL skill and historical knowledge are so frequently divorced from each other, that the Author has sought in this little book to combine the study of both for those interested in Church Embroidery. In the available space much has had to be compressed, but it is hoped it will serve as a sure foundation for the worker or the archaeologist.

The Author wishes to express her most grateful thanks to Miss H. Harvey for the revision of the practical working portion and for the loan of illustrations of some of her work; also to Dr. Dearmer for help and suggestions; to the Rev. C. B. Ramsay, for the photo of the pall at S. Gregory's, Norwich; to the Rev. J. F. Gatliff, for that of the Alveley

frontal, and to Miss Ingram for that at Peterborough. To both the Rev. O. and Mrs. Wilde thanks are due for the illustrations of the S. Ives chasubles, which are Mrs. Wilde's work. Lastly, obligations must be acknowledged with thanks to Messrs. Pearsall for kind permission to use illustrations of stitches from their *Embroidery*, and to Mr. John Hogg for the same favour from Mrs. Christie's *Embroidery and Weaving*.

ALICE DRYDEN.

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The Arts of the Church

CHURCH EMBROIDERY

CHAPTER I

Historical Sketch of English Ecclesiastical Embroidery

Embroidery in Saxon and Norman times. Comparison of embroidery with illuminated manuscripts. *Opus anglicanum.* Jewellery in embroidery. The New College mitre. The appearance of velvet. Embroidery of the latter part of the fifteenth and first part of the sixteenth century. The suppression of the monasteries and the destruction of embroideries existing in churches. Post-Reformation embroidery.

ENGLAND, in Saxon times, seems to have been famous for its embroidery. Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, speaks of the skill of English women in very early

times. He gives us to understand that English ladies contemporary with him—he lived from 630 to 709—were very skilled in the art of embroidery, in gold as well as in other threads, and in weaving ; and, too, that the knowledge of dyeing woven fabrics [1] was widely spread among the Anglo-Saxons of that time. Embroidery was much practised in convents. Thus we read of the Council of Clovesho, in 747, admonishing the nuns to occupy themselves with singing of psalms and reading rather than in weaving and embroidering. Private workers also devoted their work to the service of the Church, such as the Lady Elfwida, who was given by the monks of Ely their manor of Coveney, near that city, where she lived in retirement with her maidens, weaving and working vestments for the church.[2]

[1] *De laudibus virginitatis*, ch. xv, p. 15. Oxford : Giles. 1847.

[2] Bentham's *History of Ely* (1771) quoting from the *Historia Eliensis*.

Embroidery was equally widespread under the Norman rule. The industry focussed itself about the monasteries—those "workshops in which the traditions of ancient arts were maintained and perpetuated." In fact, the art of embroidery was one of the most important subjects of instruction in the mediaeval convents; and not only was its production a business or profession, but it was the favourite pursuit—almost the only accomplishment—of the ladies of the Saxon and Anglo-Norman laity. There were, moreover, schools, apart from the nunneries, for its teaching: one such is known to have existed in the neighbourhood of the Monastery of Ely, perhaps as early as the seventh century. As an art, embroidery ranked in dignity with sculpture and painting. During the early half of the period it was certainly in advance of either sculpture or decorative painting, and well ahead of the contemporary miniature painting; probably at no time

during the whole epoch did painting attain anything like the technical perfection reached by embroidery.

The resemblance in designs in ecclesiastical embroidery to those of illuminated manuscripts suggests that the same artists were responsible for both, or that the embroiderers or embroideresses were at the same time skilful in draughtsmanship and illumination. No doubt designs were occasionally copied directly from illuminated manuscripts. It is probable that a large number of patterns were prepared in religious houses. There is a well-known story that the versatile S. Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, designed embroideries to be worked by Æthelwynn, a noble Anglo-Saxon lady. S. Dunstan, we are told, was able to rival nature in his pictures. He was able, for instance, "to transfer a living animal from nature to his parchment, the only difference between the two being that the animal in the picture was dumb." The story

runs that while designing embroidery for a vestment required by Æthelwynn a wonderful music arose from his harp, which he had left hanging on the wall.[1]

The great period of Church embroidery was from the twelfth to the middle of the fourteenth century. It is significant that it is at this period that English illuminated manuscripts reach their highest level. Sir Edward Maunde Thompson observes that in the fourteenth century "no other nation could at that time produce such graceful drawings." The greater number of fine pieces of *opus anglicanum* preserved to-day date approximately between the years 1270 and 1350. The examples still surviving are almost invariably copes, in perfect or mutilated condition.

The term *opus anglicanum*, which is met with in inventories of church goods in

[1] This legend is narrated in the four early lives of S. Dunstan, Rolls Series, 1874, pp. 20, 21, 80, 81, 258, 259.

French, Italian, and Spanish documents, is considered to denote not only the country of origin but the value of the needlework. John, Bishop of Marseilles, in his will of 1345, made a special bequest of his albe that was wrought with "English orfrais." There are several early instances of English embroidery being sent abroad. It is recorded that in 855, King Æthelwulf, on his journey to Rome, carried with him gold-embroidered vestments, and two centuries later the wife of Edward the Confessor presented the Abbot of S. Riquier with a gift of vestments.

It is perhaps to be taken as a compliment to the *opus anglicanum* that many of the religious houses of England were stripped by William the Conqueror for the benefit of the churches of France, Aquitaine, Burgundy, and Auvergne—Peter robbed to pay Paul, as it were. He purloined from the monks of Westminster "five most valuable sets of vestments

ornamented with gold and gems,"[1] and also five chasubles; and he also took from the great Abbey of Ely eight very beautiful chasubles of various colours.[2]

A less equivocal compliment was that paid by Eadmer, a monk of Canterbury, who went with Anselm, the archbishop, to a council at Bari, held in 1098. He mentions a cope he saw there which had been a gift from Archbishop Æthelnoth (Egelnoth) to an Archbishop of Benevento who was in England on a begging tour, to gain money for the distress in his diocese. Eadmer tells us that, although he already knew the story, yet he went up to the Italian archbishop at the earliest opportunity, and asked him a number of questions about the vestment, pretending to be ignorant of its history, in order that he might have the pleasure of hearing it,

[1] From an extract from the twelfth-century Latin, *Life of King Harold*, *Harl. MSS.*, 3,776, quoted in vol. iii, p. 56, of Dugdale.

[2] Dugdale, i. 477.

and a glorification of his own Diocese of Canterbury. He ends his narrative by saying that the cope is the glory of the church of Benevento.[1]

The often-quoted story from Matthew Paris is one of the arguments for the high estimation of English work. "About the same time [1246]," he writes, "my lord Pope, having noticed that the ecclesiastical ornaments of certain English priests, such as choral copes and mitres, were embroidered in gold thread after a most desirable fashion, he asked whence came this work. 'From England,' they told him. Then the Pope, 'England is for us surely a garden of delights. Truly a well inexhaustible ; and there, where so many things are about, much may be extorted.' Thereupon the same lord Pope, moved by the desire of the eye, sent letters blessed and sealed to wellnigh all the abbots of the Cistercian Order

[1] *Historia Novorum in Anglia*, Rolls Series, 1884, at year 1098.

established in England, desiring that they should send to him, without delay, these embroideries of gold which he preferred above all others, and with which he wished to decorate his chasubles and choral copes, as if these acquisitions would cost him nothing. This command of my lord Pope did not displease the London merchants who traded in these embroideries and sold them at their own price."

When M. Francisque Michel brought to notice the extraordinary ability of English embroiderers, he added, "It is very difficult to say exactly what this work was." Since his day, close study of ancient specimens of embroidery, the gathering of them together in retrospective exhibitions, such as that at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1905, has taught us something of the characteristics of *opus anglicanum*. Authorities are agreed in recognizing certain peculiarities, one or more of which are present in any piece of English work. The evidence of heraldry

is of the first importance, for when the shields of donors or benefactors are found —as upon the Syon cope, and the chasuble in the possession of the Marquess of Bute —the nationality of the work is established. The presence of saints and martyrs of English nationality is also a presumption in favour of English origin.[1]

The figures, in English work, are generally bearded, but shaven round the mouth, and it has been noticed that "the foreheads are abnormally high and broad." The hair and beard are often of a conventional colour such as blue and green.

Some minor details are characteristically English—the cinquefoil-headed arches, the use of a quatrefoil (as in the Harlebeke cope), also the leopards' heads with protruding tongues, foliated masks, the

[1] English saints occur in the Toledo, Vich, and Bologna copes, and on the cope in the Basilica of S. John Lateran, and in a chasuble made from a cope at Anagni. The most popular English saint appears to have been S. Thomas of Canterbury.

PORTION OF AN ORPHREY. (See list.)

interlacing branches which take the place of columns and encase figure subjects; and finally, the birds of brilliant plumage, usually perched in pairs above the niches and canopies. "It seems," writes M. de Farcy, of Angers, "that the position of England, surrounded by the sea on all sides, has provoked in its inhabitants the passion of travelling over the sea, and they came to know before Continental nations of the parrots and other birds of brilliant plumage reproduced in their needlework."

It will be remembered that a peculiarity of secular embroidery in the Tudor and Stuart period is the quaint and naturalistic treatment of natural objects, especially flowers, insects, birds, and animals; and a piece of seventeenth-century stump work or tent-stitch picture is not complete without its bird biting at a cherry.

The presence of jewellery and gold thread in large quantities upon embroideries led to their destruction. Sometimes the gems were simply cut away from the

ground, and the needlework left (as in the case of the Ascoli cope). At other times, after the stones were removed, the embroidery was burnt for the gold that had been stitched on to it. Sometimes a mere wanton desire for destruction seems to have been at work, as in the case of the late eighteenth-century *drizzling* or *parfilage*.

A good illustration of jewelled embroidery is the mitre in the possession of New College, left to it by the founder, Bishop William of Wykeham, who died in 1360. The central vertical band is ornamented with jewels set in a guilloche of pearls. Round the base of the mitre runs a double band of enamelled and jewelled tablets. The enamels, of wonderful workmanship, nearly all represent an animal among foliage.

No doubt many vestments perished in use, or were altered to suit the taste of the times. The chasuble given by Geoffrey, sixteenth Abbot of St. Albans, to his

monastery, in the twelfth century, was so covered with stones and plates of gold that it was burnt by his successor because of its weight, after, presumably, the precious stones had been removed.

The line between sacred and secular embroidery was not always firmly drawn. Certainly sacred subjects were occasionally used as personal badges at the time when armorial bearings were embroidered upon military costumes, so that the leader might be recognized by his friends and followers ; otherwise, clad in armour as he was, it would have been impossible to recognize him by form and face. Froissart has a story which shows that this means of identification must sometimes have been misleading, for he relates how Sir John Chandos rode out near one of the wings of the French army, and Lord John de Clermont had gone the same to view the English. As each was returning to his quarters, they met ; they both had the same device on their surcoats—a blue lady

—encompassed with the rays of the sun [probably a representation of the B.V.M.]; it was the Frenchman who took exception and accused Sir John Chandos of bearing his device. Chandos declared it was as much his right as that of the Lord of Clermont to wear the device, and promised that, although the truce existing between the two armies upon that day prevented his testing his right by immediate combat, Lord John de Clermont would not find himself lacking opportunity to try the issue, declaring himself ready prepared to defend and prove by force of arms, "that it is as much mine as yours." Whereupon de Clermont accused Chandos of being one of the Englishmen who can invent nothing new, but take for their own whatever they see handsome belonging to another; and "so they departed without any more doing."

After the middle of the fourteenth century a distinct decline is visible in design, as in execution. The figures

CHASUBLE WITH ENGLISH ORPHREY. (See page 62.)

are ill-drawn and coarsely embroidered. The features became expressionless, the draperies heavy; and the characteristic emblems of the saints are sometimes entirely omitted.[1]

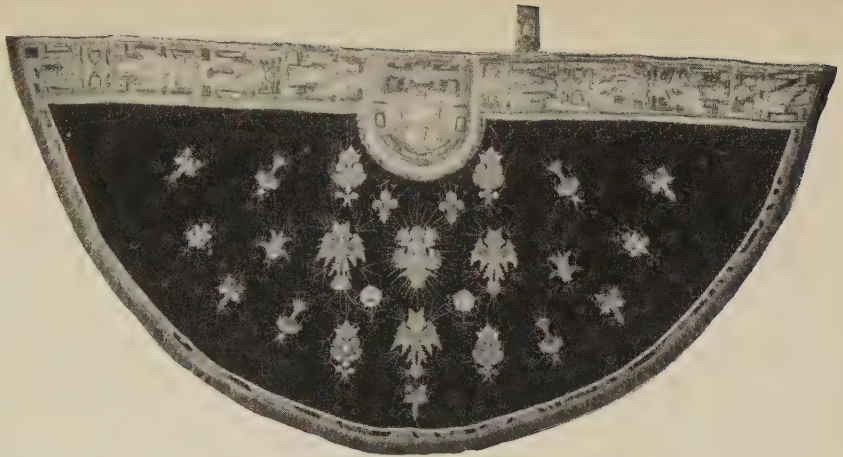
It is significant that the English school of decoration of illuminated manuscripts also falls from its high standard of drawing in the latter part of the fourteenth century. Later, the ruinous issue of the great struggle with France, the drainage of England's strength during the Wars of the Roses, were not without their influence.

Velvet, as a material for vestments, does not occur before the closing years of the thirteenth century: in the latter half of the fifteenth and the first half of the sixteenth century a very different style of embroidery became usual, conditioned by this use of

[1] "On the orphreys of a fifteenth-century chasuble belonging to Mr. Gordon Canning, the same two figures are repeated five times, no doubt to represent ten of the Apostles."—*Burlington Fine Arts Club Catalogue*, p. 33 (1905).

velvet. It was the last development before the Reformation, and quite distinct in style from contemporary Continental work. Upon this ground of velvet[1] were powdered at regular intervals large motifs, double-headed eagles, fleurs-de-lis, Tudor roses, conventional pomegranates, and other floral designs, which were worked on linen and applied to the velvet. Rays and tendrils, or light stems, dotted with spangles, encircle these motifs, and add to the lightness of effect. Of very frequent occurrence are six-winged seraphim, with wheels beneath their feet, who hold scrolls inscribed with the legend, *Da gloriam Deo.* The effect of these vestments of richly-coloured velvet is excellent, especially from a distance ; but where figures are introduced, as a central group upon a cope, on orphreys and hoods, the design is not to be compared with early work, and the technique of the embroidery is cheap and commercial.

[1] Satin or silk damask was also not infrequently used.



COPE OF PURPLE VELVET. (See page 20.)

A good dated instance of embroidery upon velvet of this character is preserved in the church at Cirencester—a pulpit-hanging made from a cope. Angels and floral devices are arranged upon a ground of blue velvet, and one angel is represented with a shield of arms, and on a scroll, "*Orate pro anima domini Radulphi Parsons.*" This Ralph Parsons, as we see by his brass in the church, died in 1478. A purple velvet cope in the V. and A. Museum dates from about 1500. The subject in the middle is the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, while, on the scrolls held by the three surrounding angels, is the legend, "*Gloria in excelsis Deo.*" The remaining space is powdered with characteristic conventional floral devices. There are a large number of embroideries of this type belonging to the churches and cathedrals of England.[1]

In vestments of this period the donors'

[1] The best list is in *English Church Furniture*. J. Charles Cox and Alfred Harvey.

name is found fairly frequently, as on a chasuble at S. George's Cathedral, Southwark, and various others, and the custom of repeating the name by means of a rebus is illustrated by the "Glover" chasuble in the possession of Downside Abbey, where a glove and the letter R represent the name Glover. The frontal once in Baunton Church, now in the possession of Mrs. Chester Master, certainly contains a rebus, but it has not been satisfactorily explained.

A curious instance of the links between history and needlework is the fate of the aged Countess of Salisbury. In 1539 an Act of Attainder was passed against her, but she was not even called to answer the accusations. At the third reading of the Bill in the House of Lords, Cromwell, Henry VIII's minister, produced as evidence of treason against her a tunic of white silk embroidered with the arms of England (i.e., three lions), surrounded by a wreath of pansies and marigolds, and

having on the back the badge of the five wounds carried by the insurgents at the time of the Northern rebellion. As the Countess had corresponded with her son, Cardinal Pole, she was for these causes condemned to death, without the privilege of being heard in her own defence, and executed in 1541.[1]

Down to the dissolution of the Religious Houses nunneries were, in Fuller's phrase, "Shee-schools wherin girles and maids were taught to work." The exercise of the art of embroidery was also usual in monasteries,[2] and many instances of the handiwork of the monks might be quoted. Even abbots did not consider it beneath their dignity to practise the art, for John Wigmore, Abbot of S. Peter's, Gloucester, from 1324–1337, gave to his monastery a

[1] A. S. Strickland, *Queens of England*, vol. iii, p. 65.

[2] In the *Canterbury Inventories*, in a list of albes and amices, occurs, "ij of white damaske Embrodryd w^t^ water flowers of gold per fratrem Thomam Bredgare."

suit of vestments *de viridi samyt cum volucribus deauratus pro festo Pentecostes quam propriis manibus texuit et fecit.*[1]

At the time of the Reformation, Gyffard, writing to Cromwell, Henry VIII's Commissioner, regarding the suppression of the religious house at Woolsthorpe, near Grantham, says, "The Governour wherof, is a vere good husband for the howse & wellbeloved of all the inhabitants thereunto adjoyning, a right honest man havyng vii religious persons beyng prestes of right good conversacion & lyvyng religiously havyng such qualities of vertue as we have nott ffownd the like in no place, for ther ys nott oon person thear but he can & doth use eyther imbrothering, wryting bookes with verey ffayre haund, makyng their owne garnements, karvyng, paynt-yng, or graffyng"—a list of arts and crafts which shows the occupants of some

[1] "Of green samite, with golden birds, for the Feast of Pentecost, which he had wrought and made with his own hands."

monasteries at least to have been by no means idle.

Towards the middle of the sixteenth century, as an after-effect of the Reformation, a cessation of ecclesiastical embroidery and a destruction of vestments and other embroideries already existing in churches took place.

The suppression of the lesser monasteries was the cause of a certain amount of destruction. The roughness, insolence, and extortion of the Commissioners sent to effect it drove the whole monastic body to despair. Their servants rode along the road with copes for doublets and tunicles for saddle-cloths, and scattered panic among the larger houses which were left.[1]

In 1539 the greater abbeys were involved in the same ruin with the smaller. For the churches it was about the year 1550 that the great destruction may be said to have really taken place, with the command

[1] J. R. Green, *A Short History of the English People*, pt. ii, p. 354.

of the Council that the altars all over the country should be pulled down and destroyed, and plain tables placed in their stead ; the destruction of sacred embroidery was a necessary consequence. The Visitors carried away almost every valuable, and "stripped the churches . . . of all gold and silver plate, and of their valuable embroidery, leaving only one chalice to each church, with a cloth or covering for the Communion table." The immense wealth of embroidered vestments and hangings possessed by English churches at the Reformation is abundantly proved by inventories, but after 1550 almost the whole of it had disappeared, some of it being burnt for the sake of the precious metals contained in the gold and silver thread so largely used, and much more passing into private hands. The reign of Queen Mary was too short to allow the disused ecclesiastical embroidery to regain its hold.

Many vestments were cut up to make

hangings for domestic use; and, as Heylyn wrote, "Many private men's parlours were hung with copes, instead of carpets and coverlids. . . . It was a sorry house, and not worth the naming, which had not something of this furniture in it, though it were only a fair large curtain made of a cope or altar-cloth to adorn the windows, or to make their chairs appear to have somewhat in them of a chair of state." To illustrate the "base uses" to which vestments may have fallen in later times, we may instance a broker who was committed, in 1634, to the Marshalsea, "for lending a church-robe with the name Jesus upon it, to the players in Salisbury Court, to present a Flamen, a priest of the heathen."

The Treasurer's Accounts of the Abbey of Westminster for the thirteenth year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth (1571), the third paragraph on folio 5 has the following entry:—(Line 6): "Thome Holmes upholster for thalering of certen coapes in

to Quisshions etc, and for the workemanship and stuffe therunto as apperith by a bill—xj li. viij sh. vijd."

At a time when Hooper, who had been named Bishop of Gloucester, refused to wear the episcopal habits, denouncing them as the livery of the "harlot of Babylon," when priests flung aside the surplice as superstitious, there was no mercy for the liturgical vestments.

When the first destructive enthusiasm of the Reformation was over, fragments that remained were no doubt put together to serve as pulpit or desk-hangings or palls, especially in the reign of Charles I, at the time when Laud aimed at the decent ordering of public worship. A number of these latter are preserved in the halls of the City Guilds, or are kept in churches.[1]

[1] Among palls made from old vestments may be mentioned those belonging to the Clothiers' Company of Worcester, and to the Church of S. Petrock, Exeter.

COPE AT EAST LANGDON. (See list.)

It is characteristic of Laud that one of his first acts at Lambeth was the restoration of the chapel there. The glazier was scandalized by the Primate's express command to repair and set up again the "broken crucifix" in the east window; the Holy Table was removed from the centre and set altarwise against the eastern wall, with a cloth of arras behind it, on which was embroidered the history of the LORD's Supper. Copes were brought back into use, and Laud tried to improve the cathedral churches in the same direction.

Another wave of destruction passed over the country at the Great Rebellion. We can see what was done in other parts of England by the destruction at Canterbury, where the Chapter had bought an embroidered purple velvet cloth to go behind the altar. Certain Puritan citizens of Canterbury presented a petition to the House of Commons in 1640, in which they complain of a "most idolatrous costly Glory-

Cloth." It was made, we learn, of "very rich Imbroydery of Gold and Silver, the name of *Jehovah* on the top in Gold upon a cloth of Silver and below it a *semicircle of Gold, and from thence glorious rayes and clouds, and gleames and points of rayes, direct and waved, streame downwards upon the altar as if Jehovah* (*God himselfe*) were there present in glory in that Cathedrall at the Altar." It was sacrificed to Puritan zeal, and on June 14, 1645, £8. 11*s.* 2*d.* were received from Sir Robert Harley, from the proceeds of burning "The Glory." [1]

This was not the only damage done in this turbulent and destructive period. In August, 1642, the troops, under Colonel Edwin Sandys, "entring the Church and Quire, Giant-like began a fight with God himselfe, overthrew the Communion Table, toare the Velvet Cloth from before it," and "further exercised their malice upon the

[1] MSS. of the Duke of Portland at Welbeck, *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, 1894, 14th Report, App. pt. ii, vol. iii, p. 133.

Arras hangings in the Quire representing the whole Story of our Saviour."[1]

The church work of the Post-Reformation period is both small in quantity and interest. There are, however, some fair specimens, chiefly altar frontals, of velvet, worked by pious ladies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Several of these are dated, and bear the initials of the giver.

[1] *The copy of a letter sent to an honourable Lord, by Doctor Paske, Subdeane of Canterbury*, London, printed Sept. 9, 1642. Quoted in *Inventories of Christ Church, Canterbury*, by J. Wickham Legg and W. H. St. John Hope.

CHAPTER II

Extant pieces of English Ecclesiastical Embroidery

The riches of the Church before the Reformation, as revealed by inventories.—The Durham fragments. The Canterbury fragments. The Worcester fragments. The Felbrigge book-cover.

Copes.—The Syon cope. The Ascoli cope. The Anagni cope. The Daroca cope. The Toledo cope. The Vich cope. The Bologna cope. The Pienza cope. The cope in the Basilica of S. John Lateran. Fragments of copes in the Textile Museum, Lyons, and the V. and A. Museum. Copes at S. Bertrand de Comminges. The Harlebeke cope. The Butler-Bowdon cope. The Durham cope.

Chasubles.—The blue chasuble in the V. and A. Museum. The red brocade chasuble. The black velvet chasuble (R. T.) in the V. and A. Museum. Salisbury, Southwark, Barnstaple, and other chasubles.

Stoles, burse, apparels.

Hearse-cloths or palls.

Altar frontals.—The Chipping Campden frontal. The Steeple Aston frontal. The Baunton frontal

(now in the possession of Mrs. Chester Master). The Alveley frontal. The Neville frontal in the V. and A. Museum.

Post Reformation embroidery.

THE lists of vestments formerly in the possession of our cathedrals and parish churches reveals an astonishing richness. The total belonging to Lincoln Cathedral exceeded 600, and in 1388 the Abbey of Westminster had an even greater number. "There was hardly a village in England, however humble and remote, the value of whose vestments did not far exceed the average income of the beneficed clergy."

The richness of Canterbury was not, therefore, exceptional; judging by an inventory[1] taken in 1540, there were 262 copes — more than double the number enumerated in 1315–16. Of suits of vestments, that is for priest, deacon, and subdeacon, over thirty are specified; and

[1] J. Wickham Legg and W. H. St. John Hope, *Inventories of Christ Church, Canterbury.*

twenty-seven chasubles, with their albes, etc., are described as being in the south aisle, that is of the quire. Of albes there were 132.

What variety of designs were used is shown by these extracts, taken from a later inventory of Canterbury, drawn up in the year 1563 :—

"Item, a cope of clothe of golde wt pomegarnettes and roses with orpheras embrodered wt pearle, in the L. Archbusshoppe his keepinge.

"Item, a cope of grene silke wt roebuckes and orpheras embrodyred with Archaungells.

"Item, a curteyne of whyte sarcenet with stories.

"Item, a cope of sattene wt ymages and braunches with vyne trees and orpheras embrodered wt nedelworke.

"Item, a cope wt horses and trees embrodered.

"Item, two copes with pheasauntes and the orpheras embrodered.

"Item, a cope of velvet embrodered wt gryffons and orpheras nedelworke.

"Item, an albe of grene damaske embrodered with beastes of gold their hornes licke a sawe."

These wonderful things are now among the "wastes of time," but we have at home and abroad, a sufficient quantity of early English needlework to cause us an unavailing regret for what is lost.

The celebrated fragments of the stole and maniple found in the tomb of S. Cuthbert, at Durham, deserve the place of honour for their beauty and antiquity. They date from a century and a half before the Norman Conquest, for at the ends of both stole and maniple, on the reverse side, occur the following inscriptions: "*Ælfflæd fieri precepit*," and "*Pio episcopo Fridestano*." Now Ælfflaed, who was the wife of Edward the Elder, died in 916.

They are worked in gold thread, red, green, blue, and purple silks (now dark and discoloured) upon a ground of linen.

PORTIONS OF DURHAM STOLE AND MANIPLE.

(See page 35.)

The stole, now in five fragments, is worked with the *Agnus Dei* and with figures of the prophets ; while the maniple, which is in better preservation, has in the centre the Hand of God, issuing from the clouds, with figures of saints. The figures, full-length, are represented standing on mounds, under a canopy of foliage. These relics are preserved in the Library of Durham Cathedral.

From a tomb in Canterbury Cathedral were removed in 1890 some remarkably fine fragments, some of which are supposed to be of the date of Archbishop Hubert Walter (1193–1205). The amice apparel, of red damask, is worked with gold and silver thread. "It has seven circles embroidered with a figure of Christ in majesty seated on a throne, in the middle, the symbols of the Evangelists on either side of the central figure, and the Archangels Michael and Gabriel at the end. The buskins and sandals are both of green silk (now discoloured) embroidered with

gold and silver thread. The former are embroidered on the legs with eagles and cross-shaped and other devices within lozenge-shaped spaces, and on the feet with star-shaped and cross-shaped ornaments."[1] On the sandals are eagles, lions, dragons, and looped devices, and small stones. The stole, which is of linen, may be of foreign origin. These fragments are now preserved in a chapel near the tomb of Henry IV.

The fragments of vestments preserved in the Library of Worcester Cathedral, though very important, are mere shreds, taken in 1870 from the tomb of a bishop, probably William de Blois (bishop, 1218–1236). The ground is red silk, the scroll-work and figures are gold thread; one fragment represents the figure of a king, with crown and sceptre, the name ADELBERTUS being inscribed above him—S. Æthelbert, King of the East Angles, who was beheaded in 794. Another figure,

[1] *Vetusta Monumenta*, vol. vii.

representing a bishop, judging by the inscription, "Nico(la)vs," is S. Nicholas of Bari.

The fragments of embroidered silk vestments found in 1861 in the tomb of William de Blois's successor, one Walter de Cantelupe (bishop, 1236–1266), are even more interesting. The largest fragment suggests a Tree of Jesse, in which a number of little figures of kings, with crown and sceptre, are seated in circular spaces among scrolling foliage.

From the same tomb came the small piece of good embroidery now in the mediaeval room at the British Museum. "There are parts of some lions, indications of the circles in which they occurred, also some foliage which occupied the spandrels of the circles." At the V. and A. Museum are other fragments of the same piece, and others were shown at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1905. In an accompanying note to a drawing of the fragments made in 1862,

immediately after the opening of the tomb, "they are described as of yellow silk with a raised diaper woven in the loom. The outline of the embroidered ornament is red silk, the filling of gold thread."[1]

Later in date are the two panels which cover the sides of a book, shown in a case of select bindings in the British Museum. The book is described as a "Psalter, end of the thirteenth century." Within, on the book itself, is an old note to the effect that after the death of Sister Anne Felbrigge,[2] it belonged to the Convent of Bruisyard. The work has been assigned to Sister Anne for no particular reason; Mr. Lethaby is of opinion that such work as this came from the hands of professional workers. The background of gold, wrought in a chevron pattern, points to

[1] Mr. W. R. Lethaby, in the *Proc. Soc. Antiquaries*, 2nd series, vol. xxi.

[2] Anne, the daughter of Sir Simon Felbrigge, K.G., lived in the latter half of the fourteenth century.

an earlier date than the fourteenth century —probably to 1280 (*cir.*), the date of the MS. The Annunciation and the Crucifixion are worked in coloured silks on canvas. The work is in very bad condition, and its beauty can only be appreciated after careful examination.

"In France the Cathedral Church of S. Bertrand de Comminges, a small village at the foot of the Pyrenees, preserves in its sacristy two magnificent copes of English work. In Spain there is the cope from Daroca College, now in the Museum at Madrid, and others at Toledo and Vich. In Italy there is an especially rich store; Bologna, Pienza, Ascoli, Rome, and Anagni, all possessing wonderful copes most probably of English origin." It will be noticed that the majority of these are worked on a gold ground.[1]

Undoubtedly the most beautiful and remarkable relic of the embroiderer's art is the thirteenth-century cope, known as

[1] *B.F.A.C.* (1905).

DETAIL OF SYON COPE. S. PAUL.
(See pages 43 and 114.)

the Syon cope—so called from its possessor, the Monastery of Syon, near Isleworth, founded in 1414–15. The nuns took refuge at Lisbon at the Dissolution ; there their convent was twice destroyed by earthquakes, and after several migrations they returned to England in the year 1830. The Earl of Shrewsbury showed kindness to the nuns, and in return they presented him with this, their most precious relic. It was eventually bought by the nation, and placed in the South Kensington Museum in 1864. The cope, which dates from the latter half of the thirteenth century, is of linen, entirely covered with embroidery of gold, silver, and silks. The design is of interlacing barbed quatrefoils in red, the intervening spaces being green, and filled with winged seraphim standing on wheels. The subjects of the quatrefoils down the middle are : our LORD blessing the B.V.M., the Crucifixion, and the Archangel Michael transfixing the Dragon, and beyond this

to the right and left of the first subject are the Death and Burial of the B.V.M.; beyond these last scenes are the Incredulity of S. Thomas, and CHRIST meeting S. Mary Magdalene in the garden. In other quatrefoils are the Apostles SS. Peter, Paul, Andrew, James the Greater, Bartholomew, Philip, Thomas, and James the Less. In its original state the cope was figured with twelve Apostles, as the imperfect pieces on the right-hand side afford us parts of three of the missing heads, while another imperfect portion to the left shows us a hand with a book, belonging to a fourth Apostle. The border running round the bottom edge and the orphrey are embroidered with heraldic shields.

Dr. Rock, reasoning from these shields, suggested that it was the work of the nuns of some religious house near Coventry, but Mr. W. R. Lethaby is inclined to think that this great piece must have been trade work, wrought in London.

The Ascoli cope was presented to the cathedral there by Pope Nicholas, in 1288. Mr. Lethaby "finds it difficult to believe" that it is of English origin. The document in which the Pope gives the cope to the Chapter mentions the pearls with which it was ornamented, but these were stripped off at the time of the Napoleonic wars. The subjects are contained in eighteen circles. In the middle a nimbed head of CHRIST, the Crucifixion, and the Blessed Virgin and Child with two angels. The other compartments contain martyrdoms of the Apostles and saints, representations of archbishops, bishops, confessors, doctors, and popes, the last in date being Clement IV (1265–68). The cope must, therefore, have been made between the year of the death of Clement IV and 1288. There is a small triangular hood, and an orphrey of interlaced circles and lozenges. It was stolen from the cathedral in 1902, and acquired two years later by Mr. Pierpont

Morgan, by whom it has been presented to the Italian Government.[1]

A cope, with three other vestments having every indication of an English origin, is preserved at Anagni. It is on record that Pope Boniface VIII gave some English embroideries to the cathedral here, and "an entry in an inventory of the Pope's vestments, made in the year 1295, mentions the cope, stating that the subjects are from the history of our LORD, beginning with the Annunciation and Nativity, and ending with the Resurrection and the Assumption of the Virgin."[2] These subjects are enclosed in circles, with angels in the intervening spaces. The ground is worked with gold thread. There is a small hood, and the cope has not been cut down or mutilated.

In the Daroca cope, now in the Madrid Museum, the subjects are enclosed in barbed quatrefoils, linked by coiling

[1] It is now in the Galleria Nazionale, Rome.

[2] *B.F.A.C.* (1905).

COPE OF ASCOLI. (See page 45)

dragons, with angels in the intervening spaces, thus somewhat resembling the scheme of the Syon cope. The ground is gold, the subjects taken from the early chapters of Genesis ; there is also a representation of the Annunciation and Crucifixion, and the enthroned CHRIST worshipped by angels. The orphreys have kings and bishops alternately, under canopies. One of the kings carries a cup, and must therefore be S. Edmund, King and Martyr. The leafage, birds, and other details are characteristically English, and recall the Steeple Aston cope, of which "this superb work, which is now exhibited by loan at South Kensington, has a peculiar gaiety of style which sets it apart from all other examples except a cope from Daroca, which resembles it so much that I think they must have come from the same workshop . . . it can hardly be later than the early years of Edward II (1307–1327)." [1]

[1] Mr. W. R. Lethaby in the *Proc. Soc. Antiquaries*, 2nd series, vol. xxi.

Another English cope in Spain is preserved in the cathedral at Toledo. It is stated to have been the property of Cardinal Gil de Albornoz (d. 1367), who mentions a cope of English work in his will.

The principal subjects are the Coronation of the B.V.M., the Nativity, and the Annunciation. Various Apostles and saints are represented of the Syon type.

This cope is "quite a dictionary of English features," from the damasked gold patterns of the ground to the variety of naturalistic birds represented. The orphrey has quatrefoils between tabernacles, the prophets (or confessors) and kings stand in tendrils of foliage, and there is a collection of English saints—Edward the Confessor, King Ethelbert, S. Dunstan, S. Thomas of Canterbury, Edmund the King. The saints all stand on their enemies—Edward the Confessor on the King of the Danes, Dunstan on the devil, Thomas on a knight. The

saints selected for representation are very similar to those of the Butler-Bowdon cope. There is no hood.[1]

In the mutilated cope in the Episcopal Museum at Vich, in Spain, the principal subjects are the Coronation of the B.V.M., the Nativity, and the Adoration of the Magi. An inventory of the cathedral mentions a cope of crimson velvet, with images, foliages, and saints, given by Bishop R. de Ballera (1353–1377).

It is "very English," as de Farcy writes. The ground is red velvet, the design of the semi-arcaded type; the interlacing branch-work has foliated masks, and there are several English saints represented—Edward the Confessor, S. Thomas of Canterbury, S. Alban, and S. Edmund.

The cope in the Civic Museum at Bologna has two zones of arcading,

[1] Mr. W. R. Lethaby in the *Proc. Soc. Antiq.*, 2nd series, vol. xxi: Edward the Confessor would appear to be a mistake for Edmund.

COPE AT MOUNT S MARY S COLLEGE, [illegible] (See list.)

Plate 9.

containing the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity, the Angel appearing to the shepherds, the Journey into Egypt, the Massacre of Innocents, the Presentation in the Temple, the Magi before Herod, the Journey and Adoration of the Magi, the Angel warning the Magi in a dream, and the Martyrdom of S. Thomas of Canterbury, which almost seems to sign it as of English workmanship. In the other zone the subjects are from the Passion. The spandrels are occupied by angels, some with instruments of music, others holding crowns. The hood is missing.

The Pienza cope was presented by Pope Pius II (1458–1464). It has a ground worked with animals, birds, and foliage, in gold thread. The inner zone of arcading represents scenes from the life of the B.V.M. In the middle zone are the Angels appearing after the Ascension of CHRIST to the Apostles, and further scenes from the life of the Virgin. "In the outer zone are six scenes from the legend

of S. Margaret and seven scenes from the legend of S. Catherine of Alexandria. On the orphrey and border are birds and animals, in some instances superimposed. There is a small hood." The lower spandrels contain the twelve Apostles, who carry swords inscribed with clauses of the Apostles' Creed.

The cope in the Basilica of S. John Lateran (that of S. Silvester) is embroidered on a gold ground. "The subjects in the middle are the Coronation of the Virgin, the Crucifixion, and the Nativity. On the inner zone of arcading are the Ascension of CHRIST, the Descent of the HOLY SPIRIT, the Assumption of the Virgin, and the Angel announcing to the Virgin her approaching death." On the middle zone, scenes from the Passion. In the outer zone, the Last Supper, martyrdoms of various saints (including S. Edmund and S. Thomas of Canterbury), and other subjects. Between the zones angels are represented, some playing instruments

of music. The birds, and the arcades on open interlacing pillars, are typically English.

The Tree of Jesse forms the subject of a strip in the Musée des Tissus at Lyons, which was formerly in the Spitzer collection. This piece is dated by de Farcy at the end of the thirteenth century (about 1290, says Mr. Lethaby), and the French specialist compares it with the very similar mutilated rose-coloured Jesse-tree cope in the V. and A. Museum. One may say that they are from the same workshop. The figures are almost exactly the same, only David and Solomon are interchanged. In the cope, a vine, bearing leaves and fruit, springs from the recumbent figure of Jesse at the bottom of the cope. Above this figure, and enclosed by the branches of the vine, are seated David with a harp, Solomon with a sceptre, and the Virgin and Child. Among the stems on either side are worked figures of Old Testament kings and prophets.

JESSE TREE COPE.

The persons are all named in inscriptions of a Lombardic character. The green velvet orphrey, which has been preserved with the fragmentary cope, evidently formed no part of it in its original condition.

There are two copes at S. Bertrand de Comminges—one given in 1309 by Pope Clement V, who was at one time the bishop of the diocese. The ground is gold damasked with patterns.[1] The subjects that remain represent scenes from the Passion, the Ascension, and the Descent of the Holy Spirit, and are enclosed in foliated stems, forming irregular circles. Very naturalistic birds and beasts of many kinds are represented between these panels. The subject in the middle is the Coronation of the Virgin. The hood is missing. The second cope, called the cope of the Virgin, has a ground of plain silk, and interlacing stems of ivy, oak, and vine, with foliated masks

[1] *B.F.A.C.*, 1905.

and leopards' heads covering the whole field. Upon the stems stand figures of the angels, Apostles, and of S. John the Baptist. The central position is occupied by the Virgin and the Child. This cope may be dated about 1300, and it is known to have been given at the same time as the first cope. It has been cut down, and the hood is of Louis XV brocade.

A very beautiful vestment, the Harlebeke cope, in the Brussels Museum, stands by itself, and authorities are divided as to its country of origin. The authorities of the Brussels Museum are of opinion that it is French, whereas the committee of the Burlington Fine Arts Club, in 1905, considered it a very fine example of *opus anglicanum*. This opinion is shared by M. de Farcy, who writes of it, "On the cope of Harlebeke and on some others the pinnacles separating the arches are divided towards the middle of their height by a little *quatrefoil*, a detail

very characteristic of English work. It occurs in the beautiful English Psaltery of the Abbey of Peterborough in the Royal Library of Brussels." [1]

The Butler-Bowdon cope, which was exhibited at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1905, belongs to the fourteenth century, but while de Farcy assigns it to the close, Mr. Lethaby thinks it belongs to the first half of that century. The ground is crimson velvet, the design of the arcaded type, and the open interlacing pillars that support the arches are characteristic. The subjects up the back are : the Annunciation, the Adoration of the Magi, the Enthronement of the Virgin. The orphreys have royal and ecclesiastical saints alternately, which seems to be an English feature.

The velvet copes of the later period do not need individual description.

A respectable example of stump work as applied to ecclesiastical embroidery is

[1] L. de Farcy, "Opus anglicanum" ii, in *Embroidery*.

the Durham cope, traditionally presented by Charles I to the Chapter of Durham. The ground is of crimson satin, powdered all over with stars ; the border is covered with angels' heads crowned with rays, and borne up by wings. Upon the hood is represented David holding in one hand the severed head of Goliath. The whole is highly raised.

The earliest and most interesting CHASUBLE known to us is the Blue Chasuble in the V. and A. Museum.

This beautiful work is of early thirteenth-century date, though the vestment itself has been cut into the degenerate seventeenth-century pattern, known as fiddle-shaped. The ground is blue satin embroidered with coloured silks and gold thread. The orphrey on the back has a row of figure subjects in quatrefoils—the Crucifixion, the Virgin and Child, SS. Peter and Paul and the Martyrdom of S. Stephen. The rest of the back, and all the front, are embroidered with delicate

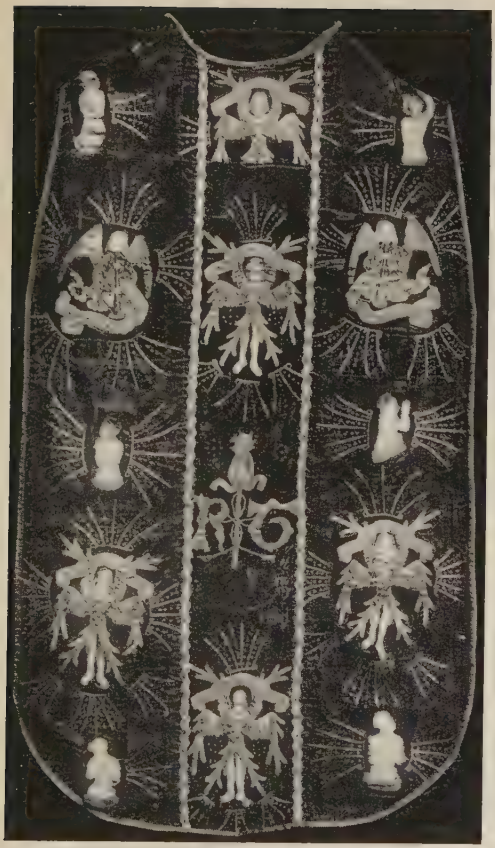
BLUE CHASUBLE. (See list.)

light scroll-work with dragons and lions enclosed in set circles, suggesting goldsmith's work. Its pedigree only dates to 1786, when it formed the subject of some correspondence in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.[1] There were then a stole and a maniple belonging to it embroidered with coats of arms, apparently indicating that they were made for Margaret de Clare, wife of Edmund Plantagenet, Earl of Cornwall. This would dispose of Dr. Rock's theory that it was Sicilian, an attribution apparently accepted by de Farcy. Mr. Lethaby compares the lions and scroll-work with his restoration of the fragments of embroidery from Worcester, representing a very similar design.

The late thirteenth-century chasuble at Anagni is, in Mr. Kendrick's opinion, of English workmanship, "with the exception of the orphrey, which is German, and added probably at the time that this and the dalmatics were made from fragments

[1] Vol. lvi. pp. 298, 473, 584.

of copes." A chasuble of red brocaded damask in the V. and A. Museum (No. 935, 1901) has a beautiful orphrey of the late fourteenth century on the back. The orphrey is cross-shaped. At the head is the meeting of our LORD with S. Mary Magdalene. A male and female saint stand under richly foliated canopies, with interlacing twisted pillars. A coat of arms (Boteler impaling Le Strange) has been applied in the centre of the orphrey. The cross-shaped pectoral orphrey has the Crucifixion for its centre subject. Another chasuble in the same collection is of the late fifteenth century. It is of dark red velvet, embroidered with conventional floral designs of great beauty. Of the early sixteenth century is a black velvet chasuble with crimson orphreys, (967, 1902). Here angels are blowing trumpets to awake the dead, and hold scrolls with the words "SURGITE MORTUI" and "VENITE AD JUDICIUM." Figures of the rising dead are also represented, and angels



BLACK VELVET CHASUBLE.

bearing scrolls inscribed "Justorum Anime" and "In Manv Dei Svnt." The initials R. T. with the staff and mitre, form the same device as that on the grave slab of Robert Thornton, Abbot of Jervaulx (1510–1533). This vestment is of greater interest because its original ownership is practically certain.

Compared to the number of copes the chasubles known of English work are exceedingly few. This arose naturally by reason of the chasuble being disliked by the Reformers as the Eucharistic vestment, whereas copes were ordered (1564) to be used "in the ministration of the Holy Communion by the principall minister epistoler and gospeller." The Canons of 1604 again ordered the use of copes in cathedrals, and they were kept up at Durham till the end of the eighteenth century. The only chasuble still remaining in its original home is that at Salisbury Cathedral, of blue-green velvet and cloth of gold, the orphreys em-

broidered in gold thread and coloured silks on linen. On the orphreys are represented figures beneath leafy canopies upon a background of diapered gold. Those on the front orphrey are: two prophets, and S. Andrew with transverse cross and book. On the cross-shaped orphrey on the back is represented the Crucifixion, with God the Father and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove above the Cross; below are figures of S. Matthew (with an axe) and S. Thomas (with a spear). Above the last figure is the inscription, "Orate P(ro) A(n)i(m)a Johany Baldwyn. The orphrey is enriched with spangles. Date, fifteenth century; the velvet is Italian weaving of the same period.

The Roman Catholic Cathedral of S. George at Southwark has acquired two chasubles—one of early sixteenth century, extensively restored, of deep purple violet velvet embroidered in gold and silver, which has the Crucifixion on the cross-

shaped dorsal orphrey. Beneath the cross is a scroll bearing the inscription —"Pray for ye sowlls of Thoms Sales and Helene hys wyfe."

A most interesting vestment is that which was discovered last year by Mr. Sidney Harper, of Barnstaple, to whom we are indebted for the photograph. It is late in date (A.D. 1459), but it is one of the few surviving chasubles that have been but little cut down, the design being fairly whole. The ground of white brocaded silk damask is powdered with winged seraphim and floriated designs. On the cross are fleurs-de-lis and floriated designs, with the Virgin and Child in the centre. It probably appears in the Inventory of the Parish Church of Barnstaple in 1562, and was found by Mr. Harper in private hands at Braunton, near Barnstaple.[1]

S. Dominic's Priory, Haverstock Hill, possess a fine suite of chasuble, stole,

[1] For detailed description, see *Burlington Magazine*. M. P. Perry, Oct., 1910.

maniple, chalice veil, and burse of red fifteenth century Italian velvet. The Benedictines of Downside possess the Glover chasuble of red satin with orphreys of green satin ; the ground sprinkled with the letters P and R worked in gold, and gloves cut out of white satin, appliquéd. On the cross-shaped dorsal orphrey is embroidered in Gothic letters " Orate p(ro) a(n)i(m)a fam(u)li tui P. (a glove) R."

At Oscott College, Birmingham, amongst other vestments there is a late fifteenth-century chasuble of blue velvet with broad border of plain red velvet. The embroidery is executed in gold and coloured silks on linen ; the orphreys have the customary subjects.

Amongst those in private hands exhibited at the Burlington Club was one belonging to the Marquess of Bute which has orphreys with half-length figures within barbed interlaced quatrefoils, alternately red and blue upon a diapered gold ground. One quatrefoil contains a shield bearing

the arms of John Grandisson, Bishop of Exeter (1327–1369).

Belonging to Colonel Butler-Bowdon is one of old brocaded blue satin with a cross-shaped orphrey of red velvet embroidered with the arms of Henry Stafford, second Duke of Buckingham, and foliated stems joined by Stafford knots. The arms date it at about 1474.

The list of the smaller embroidered ornaments remaining is lamentably short. There are two STOLES belonging to Lord Willoughby de Broke and Miss Weld of Leagram respectively, and a MANIPLE with Miss Weld's, of practically the same work—coats of arms on alternate squares of red and green, embroidered in coloured silks.

With the Barnstable chasuble were found a stole and maniple of green silk (3 inches wide spreading at the end to $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches), the ornament of which associates "the Passion of CHRIST" with "the Passion of the Blessed Virgin." This of

BARNSTAPLE CHASUBLE (See page 66.)

itself would indicate a late Gothic period. At one end of both, within a rayed circle, is a Latin cross over I.H.S., beneath which are two nails ; in a similar circle at the other end are the letters M.R.A., with a crown above and a heart pierced by a sword below. The stole has evidently been much shortened, for it is joined, and the usual small cross is now decentralized by some 15 inches.[1]

Burses, being small, have been made in later years with portions of old embroideries ; but one in the V. and A. Museum, of the fourteenth century, displays the elaborate pictorial effects it was customary to work for them. This burse is embroidered in coloured silks on linen. On the front is a lozenge-shaped panel with a head of Christ, and a bird in each corner, set in a dark blue border wrought with crosses on stars, edged beyond with fleurs-de-lis (subsequently painted over to

[1] For detailed description, see *Burlington Magazine*. M. P. Perry, Oct., 1910.

Burse or Corporal Case

Plate 14.

look like crosses). In each corner is an eagle displayed on a red ground. On the back is a panel of similar form with the *Agnus Dei*, and a cross in each corner. The red border is worked with peacocks and fleurs-de-lis, and is edged beyond with smaller fleurs-de-lis. In each corner is a large star enclosing a rosette, on a green ground.

There are two AMICE APPARELS of great interest remaining; one—that attributed to S. Thomas of Canterbury—exhibited at the Burlington Club by S. Thomas's Abbey of Erdington.[1] The ground is of deep purple silk embroidered with gold in a geometric design of interlaced circles and floriated crosses with pearls as centres. The collar is surrounded by a border consisting of two narrow strips of green braid, and an outer edging of crimson silk.

[1] It was preserved for many years in the treasury of the Cathedral at Sens; and was presented to S. Thomas's Abbey by the Rev. Daniel Haigh.

The second is at Sens Cathedral—the apparel of S. Edmund, which dates back to 1247. It has four heads in circular medallions in gold and silk on a red ground. At Pontigny is his maniple, also apparently English work, with two figures superimposed.[1]

The beautifully embroidered FUNERAL-PALLS or HEARSE-CLOTHS belonging to several of the City Companies are indeed valuable as links between the sacred and secular work. The greater number of these palls are composed of an oblong piece of material, generally velvet, with flaps at the sides and ends. They usually bear the arms of the Company and other devices appropriate to their use. The Fishmongers' Company, and the Saddlers, Vintners, and Brewers, possess palls of early date. The late fifteenth-century one belonging to the Brewers

[1] L. de Farcy, *La Broderie*. S. Edmund was Archbishop of Canterbury ; he was buried in the Abbey of Pontigny.

consists of a central panel of rich cloth of gold, with side and end flaps of embroidered velvet. The embroidery represents the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary between the arms of the Archbishopric of Canterbury and the Brewers' arms ; the whole is powdered with ears of barley. The pall belonging to the Fishmongers' Company dates from the reign of Henry VIII. It is of long, rectangular shape, with two long and two short pendent panels, which form its border. The main ground is of fine Flemish red gold brocade. The two short pendent panels are ornamented with S. Peter, robed and seated, holding the keys. Each of the two long pendent panels has as its centre CHRIST entrusting the keys to S. Peter, flanked by the arms of the Stockfishmongers and Salt-fishmongers united into one shield, having as supporters a woman clad in golden armour, and a mermaid with a jewel hanging from her neck, and in her hand a looking-

glass. The Companies were united in 1536.

In the pall of the Saddlers' Company the ground is crimson velvet ; the centre pattern is of circles, each enclosing a rose woven in raised loops of gold, the surrounding roses and stems being in flat gold thread. The crowns which connect the circle and the rosettes in the intervening spaces are also in gold loops. The main part of the two long falling lappets is taken up by an inscription—the last words of the *Te Deum*—in silver-gilt thread, stitched down to produce a basket-work effect, and outlined by yellow silk cord. In the middle of each lappet is an oval-rayed glory, supported by five half-figures of angels issuing from clouds. These now contain I.H.S., but there are evidences of alteration ; the monogram letters are of later type than the inscription, and the silver spangles surrounding the monogram are flat ; those elsewhere employed are of ridged form. Possibly

the figure of the Virgin was removed when images were thought popish. The pall dates from the early years of the sixteenth century.[1] Three palls were presented to the Merchant Taylors' Company in 1562, one to the Stationers' in 1572, others were possessed by the Brewers', Coopers', Leathersellers', and Founders' Companies.[2]

Other notable palls are in the possession of the municipality of Sudbury, the Vicar of Dunstable, Oxford University, and the Church of S. Gregory, at Norwich. The Sudbury pall is of velvet, embroidered with figures of the dead in shrouds, the inscriptions on the scrolls being taken from the "Office of Matins for the Dead," and the "Litany of the Faithful Departed." It is of late fifteenth-century date.[3] S. Gregory's Church,

[1] A. F. Kendrick, *Art Workers' Quarterly*, October, 1905.

[2] A. F. Kendrick, *English Embroidery*.

[3] Ibid.

Norwich, has a purple pall, worked with angels bearing the souls of the departed. The Dunstable pall, which is said to have been given by Henry Fayrey (d. 1516) to the Fraternity of S. John the Baptist at that place, is composed of velvet and cloth of gold, and bears, besides figures of the Virgin Mary and S. John the Baptist, and several members of the Fayrey family, the arms of the Mercers' and Haberdashers' Companies. [1]

Very few of the ALTAR FRONTALS are in their original form, as in the case of the upper and nether frontals at Chipping Campden ; most of them are made up from vestments, usually copes. The Chipping Campden frontals (*c.* 1500) are of white satin damask, the embroidery worked in gold and silver thread and coloured silks upon linen. In the middle of the upper frontal is the Assumption of the B.V.M., the rest of the surface is powdered with conventional flowers. The

[1] A. F. Kendrick, *English Embroidery*.

Photo] [*J. P. Stanley, Norwich.*

PALL AT S. GREGORY'S, NORWICH.

central subject of the nether frontal is the Annunciation. No other complete ancient pair of English altar frontals is known.[1]

The Steeple Aston upper frontal is made from the middle portion of a cope, of early fourteenth-century work, and is embroidered with gold and silver threads and coloured silks upon a ground of white silk (now faded to cream). The principal subject is the Coronation of the B.V.M. Beneath this is the Crucifixion, with the Blessed Virgin and S. John standing at the foot of the Cross. At the bottom is CHRIST bearing the Cross, urged by two

[1] The design of the frontal and dorsal offered to Westminster Abbey by King George and Queen Mary at their Coronation is taken from these. The ground is of similar cream damask powdered with floral *motifs* in coloured silks and gold, but the figures (far too small for their position) are from the original designs of Mr. Lethaby.

Both in colouring and design the new hangings are ineffective, and illustrate the importance of bearing in mind the remarks in the last paragraph of "Design of Altar Hangings," *Post*, p. 173.

executioners. In the other compartments are the martyrdoms of saints. The remaining portions of the cope, with portions of the orphrey, have been combined into an altar frontal representing more martyrdoms of saints. At the sides are portions of the cope orphrey, embroidered with angels on horseback, playing musical instruments, and barbed quatrefoils enclosing animals, birds, and fishes on a diapered gold background.

The beautiful fourteenth-century frontal in the V. and A. Museum, depicting the life of the Virgin, comprises ten scenes designed by some master artist of his day. It is of crimson velvet with the scenes embroidered in coloured silks and silver-gilt thread. Between the canopies are the arms of Thornell of Suffolk and Fitton.

A fine and most interesting frontal is that at Alveley, Shropshire, dated 1470, and no doubt original. It is of the paled type—alternate red and white stripes bear-

Crimson Velvet Altar Frontal.

Plate 16.

ing feathered angels with scrolls and fleur-de-lis. In the centre is "The Waiting Church," i.e., the souls of the departed in the bosom of Abraham.

A remarkable fifteenth-century[1] altar frontal, once at Baunton, in Gloucestershire, is now in the possession of Mrs. Chester Master. It is made of alternate pales of red and yellow satin. In the middle is the Crucifixion, with the B.V.M. and S. John at the foot of the Cross. Below is a curious rebus. An eagle, rising, grips by the back a white ass. Below the ass is a barrel or tun, from which issue stems with seeds or berries. This may stand for the name of the donor, one John As(h)burton ; the eagle standing for John, and the plant growing out of the tun being intended for burrs.[2] The

[1] Second half of the fifteenth century. Thomas Aston was abbot in 1488–1504, but his name does not contain the bird.

[2] A Canterbury inventory mentions copes of "white velvet with burres embroidered."

rest of the frontal is *semé* with double-headed eagles displayed.

An altar frontal dating from the close of Henry VIII's reign in the V. and A. Museum, is of stamped crimson velvet, upon which are applied raised figures. In the centre is the Crucifixion. To the left is Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmorland (1499–1550), and behind him are ranged his seven sons ; on the right is his wife, Lady Catherine Stafford (d. 1555), and behind her are their thirteen daughters.

Although the ecclesiastical embroiderer's art died out in England with the Reformation, and has only been resumed for Church purposes in comparatively recent years, there are a few instances of decently-worked church hangings of the intermediate period. At Bacton, in Herefordshire, is an altar-cloth, made from a portion of a dress, beautifully enriched with silver and embroidered with fruit, foliage, and figures, which was presented to the

church by Mistress Blanche Parry, Maid of Honour to Queen Elizabeth. Of the seventeenth century are the altar-cloths of Anstey, Herts., Portsmouth Parish Church, and Bourne S. Mary, Hants. The Anstey altar frontal is of plum-coloured velvet, probably made to cover the top and sides as well as the front of a very small altar. A large oval medallion is worked upon the frontal in green and gold, and is surrounded by rays, and has $\frac{\text{I.H.S.}}{1637}$ in the centre.

The Ladies Culpepper wrought, during the Commonwealth, embroidered velvet coverings for the altar and pulpit-desk of Hollingbourne, in Kent, and presented them at the Restoration. At Mattingley, Hants., is preserved a once handsome altar-cloth of gold-fringed crimson velvet, with gold embroidered design, and the date "Anno Domini 1667." Also of crimson velvet is the altar-cloth of Portsmouth Parish Church, given by Thomas Ridge in 1693, and it has been in use

ALTAR CLOTH AT HOLLINGBOURNE. (See page 84.)

ever since. It is embroidered in gold thread, with the sacred monogram in a wreath of branches, together with the date. At Weston Favell, Northants., over the altar is represented the Passover in needlework, on a ground of bugles, by Jane, wife of Sir John Holman, Bart. ; above it is inscribed "*Gloria Deo*," and below, "Weston Favell, December, 1698."

At Bourne S. Mary, in Hampshire, an old altar-cloth of the year 1687, with the date and the churchwardens' initials embroidered on the upper frontal, is preserved in a glass case in the church.

Dating from the eighteenth century are various pieces—an old altar-cover at Tinsley, in Derbyshire, worked with the arms and crest of William Coke, by his wife, Catherine, and her four daughters, Catherine, Susanna, Mary, and Frances, whose initials appear on the cloth. It was first used at the reopening of the church in 1713. Fragments of this cloth are now framed in the vestry. At Whiston, in

Northants., is an altar-cover dated 1704, with the initials M. P., for the Hon. Mary Paget, who worked it ; at Whickham, in Durham, there is an altar-cloth, with impaled arms, and crests of Bowes and Blakiston, and initials E. B., referring to Dame Elizabeth Bowes, the heiress of Gibside, who died in 1736.

CHAPTER III

Tools—Materials—Foundation—Preparation

Tools

FRAME. For Church embroidery it is absolutely essential to use a frame, as the foundation of the work must be stretched very tight; also, it must be fixed so that both hands are free for use, one above and the other underneath. The worker must learn to use both hands equally. It is not essential that the frame must have its own stand—all that is necessary is to support it in such a manner that it is level and firm; chairs, tables, or trestles may be used, and weights attached to the corners of the frame, so that it will not move; but

there is no doubt that the best support is the Moberley stand, which can be adjusted to any height or angle, and which can be had in different sizes. Needless to say the frame should be of well-seasoned wood not to warp, strong and firm, not too light, and should be larger than seems necessary, as the work should not approach the edge. On the top and bottom bars are nailed strips of webbing for the foundation to be sewn to ; the bars are stretched apart by holes and pegs in the side pieces, and then braced with string.

Needles. Embroidery needles for working with floss silk should have large eyes to hold it without rubbing, or long eyes for flat silk ; they are best got from Debenham & Frebody, whose make has the eyes smoothly finished off. A large needle in proportion to the silk should always be used not to fray the silk. No. 6 is a good general size.

Thimbles. Two thimbles are wanted, one for each hand ; they must be very

smooth, and preferably of ivory or celluloid—not silver, which is apt to blacken the work.

Scissors should be strong, and have very sharp fine points to cut with ; those for cutting gold especially must have the sharpest points possible. Good nail scissors are best.

Spatula. For use chiefly in assisting to place the gold in position ; a little tool is wanted, made of steel, about 5 ins. long, with one end broadened and flattened out, and the other end drawn into a sharp point for piercing holes in the material on occasions.

Materials for Work

Floss silk, sewing silk, and filoselle used for outlining. Cotton padding for floss, yellow cotton paddings for gold, macramé string to make raised lines, yellow cloth for padding (to be got from regimental tailors), spangles, jewels,

Japanese paper gold, and gold and silver threads.

For working faces "tram" silk should be used.

Floss silk must be carefully handled and kept; it is now always sold ready wound on reels. The floss thread is generally split for work; the division is easily found and made by holding the reel in one hand, the end of the floss in the other, and running a finger down between the two. Care must be taken to use the floss the right way, so that the silk filaments of which it is composed do not get rubbed up the reverse way; the floss is usually wound so that the open end should be threaded, but as it is not invariably so wound, the best method is to draw a few inches lightly between the finger and thumb when it will be perceived which is the smooth and rough way of the filaments. Except when absolutely necessary, floss should be touched as little as possible, as handling spoils the gloss. When working

a stitch a beginner is advised to draw the floss over a needle to remove any twist. When put in place, it may be carefully stroked—*not scratched*—to adjust it. A needleful should be about 21 ins., to avoid rubbing through more floss than can be helped.

Silver thread was employed formerly, and is still used abroad, more than in the present day in England, where the atmosphere tarnishes it so quickly.

When silver effect is wanted, aluminium thread that does not tarnish is now generally used.

Gold thread. In olden days gold strands were either fashioned the same way that the Japanese gold is manufactured to-day —that is, narrow strips of gilded vellum encircling a thread—or else a flat beaten ribbon of metal gold. Of this old metal, which has kept so marvellously, we learn, for example, that in 1271, for the frontal presented by Henry III to Westminster Abbey, the gold was flat-

tened out by gold beaters into a sheet as thin as the thinnest paper, and was then twisted in long narrow strips round a line of silk.

The disadvantage of the metal is that when old and decayed it rotted the silk it touched.

When Church embroidery began its revival under the impulse of the Oxford Movement, the gold metal thread used of either English or foreign make was called "Passing"—which has long since tarnished. About the year 1865 a lady first thought of importing the Chinese paper gold, and later it was succeeded by the Japanese, which is the sort now generally used, for as it consists of burnished gilt paper twisted on silk, there is no metal to tarnish. The best—"C" quality—is burnished with silver and generally twisted on orange silk; the second—"B" quality—burnished with copper, and is on red silk. These two qualities give different shades. On rare

occasions, when effect is desired for a special scheme of colouring, the metal gold thread is made use of.

Japanese gold thread must be carefully handled and kept in the skein when working—not wound upon reels, as is sometimes suggested, because this is apt to split the paper and show the silk upon which the gold is twisted.

Foundation

The best material on which to embroider is stout unbleached linen made with even round threads ; wash, boil, and pull out whilst drying, and do not iron it. It is best that the linen should be the length of the webbing, which makes the strain more even. If, therefore, small and large work is likely to be undertaken, different sized frames should be acquired. The upper and lower edges which are sewn on to the webbing should not be hemmed, but the two sides should be firmly hemmed

over string to make them stout for the lacing.

To put in the frame, first sew the linen to the webbing and stretch out as tightly as possible ; then lace the ends with string, being careful to pull the linen evenly first one side, then the other, alternately, till it is stretched like a drum. The sewing should be on the wrong side, and the webbing held next the worker. Should the linen be shorter than the webbing care should be taken that it is put on quite even on both sides. In bracing the ends, the string lacing should not be more than 1 in. apart, and should be round the cross-bars only.

The work may be done direct on the ground of the vestment or hanging, or, especially in the case of velvet, it may be done upon a linen foundation and afterwards applied to the ground. If the embroidery is intended to be done direct on the rich material, the frame should be mounted with linen in precisely the

same way as described above ; then the first thing is to get two lines at right angles, from which the measures can be taken for placing the silk ; rule a pencil line for the edge that is to be worked against. Care must be taken to get the right way up of the silk ; first sew it along the bottom, then up the sides, and lastly, pull the top up tight. The stitch for applying the silk to this linen will be described later. (Pages 99 and 133.)

Great care must be taken in the preliminary fixing and setting out of the work, or the best stitching in the world will be wasted ; and much stress must be laid on cleanliness, both as regards the work itself and the keeping of the materials. Over each portion as finished a piece of silver paper should be sewn. The embroideress when at work should always wear a pair of clean white linen oversleeves. The hands should be kept clean and smooth by rubbing with pumice-stone ; no grease should be used to them.

Tracing

When the frame has been properly stretched and prepared, the next step is to transfer the design to the material.

Begin by laying a piece of clear tracing paper on the design, keeping it firmly in place by weights, a method which avoids the holes made by pins. With a good H.B. pencil trace clearly the outline of the design, being careful to follow the lines exactly, then remove the paper and lay it on smooth serge or cloth and prick finely the pencilled lines—about twenty-four to thirty holes per inch. The best pricker is a fine needle with sealing-wax head. Be sure to prick holes quite straight, holding needle upright to insure a clear hole. When this is done, lay the pricked design on your material and pounce it on, using either light or dark pounce, in contrast to colour of material. The pounce can be made of powdered cuttle-fish, and darkened when required with

charcoal. It should be applied with a pad made of cloth or flannel firm enough to rub the pounce smoothly through the holes, care being taken to keep the design perfectly steady and to transfer it quite clearly. When this is done, if on silk, the powdered lines should be painted with a fine-pointed sable brush with water-colour paints — Chinese white on dark material, and for white or light materials the white should be darkened with Prussian blue or black. If the design is to be transferred to linen, the drawing can be done with ordinary pen and ink, or paint, or stencilled on, if a suitable stencilling ink can be obtained. A great deal of the beauty of a production depends on the accuracy of the tracing, so no trouble should be spared to get this part of the work correctly done.

When the design has to be traced on silk it is very important that the silk should be properly stretched on the linen, and as the linen is tightened by the

stretching of the frame, it will be understood that to get the silk stretched on, it is not an altogether easy matter. Several things must be considered.

Firstly, the material must be put on straight and at right angles, so that the material when sewn on is absolutely straight both ways. To effect this it is well to draw two lines at right angles on the linen and measure from them, and the stretcher should be put in such a way as to draw out the silk with every stitch. This is done by putting up the needle about a quarter of an inch beyond the silk, and in pricking down slant the needle towards you so that the silk is drawn out beyond its own length on the linen which, when completed all round, will be found to have made the silk come quite tight. Care should be taken that the pricking up of stitch and pricking down are on straight lines to insure an even pull on the material, in some cases it is advisable to pin out the edge before

sewing. When sewing up on the edge linen thread is best to use, but in all cases when work has to go across a material, as in a stole that is only worked up a short way, silk thread should be used; and it is wise, especially with velvet, to make a narrow fold of tissue paper and sew through it to the silk: it helps to avert marking of stitches.

Cutting out. When work has been done on linen, before being cut out, it should be pasted on the back well over the edges of the work—common white shoemaker's paste is best, or good stickphast, or any thick paste freshly made.[1] When pasting work down on silk, care must be taken

[1] For paste which is sure to bind and not come through on the surface, take three tablespoons of flour and as much powdered resin as will lie on a shilling, mix them smoothly with half a pint of water, pour into an iron saucepan, and stir till it boils. Let it boil five minutes, use cold. The fingers are best for applying it as they can best ensure perfect smoothness.

Photo] [*W. R. Grove, Esq., M.B.*

MODERN CHASUBLE. (See list.)

not to put paste over the edges, but strictly on the work. When dry, cut out with sharp scissors, leaving a narrow even edge of linen about a sixteenth of an inch. It is well to be careful to keep this edge even in the cutting out, as though it can be pared off afterwards, it is never so sharp as when done at first. When of an elaborate design, it is well to leave narrow strips of linen to keep the different parts in shape.

The velvet or other ground will be suitably framed and put in position to receive the applied ornaments; it is not always necessary to draw the designs upon it, but if of elaborate outline they must be pounced through to ensure absolute correctness.

Applications of ornaments. When the work is ready to lay on the silk it should first be firmed and kept in place by pins, then with a needle and thread it should be firmly but invisibly attached down the centre, and every point where pins have

been placed. After this, it should be attached all over at intervals of about half an inch in the same invisible way, accomplished by pulling up the needle straight, holding with the hand the thread, putting the needle back in almost the same place but slanting it so as to hold firmly. When all the work has been attached in this way, commence and hem the edges all round with stitches from about one-sixth to one-eighth of an inch apart.

When this is done the work is ready to be couched, or sewn round with a mounting line of filosel or floss or cord as desired. The strands of filoselle should be laid down and sewn with two threads of same, about sixteen to twenty stitches to an inch pricked up on the outside and the needle run under the edging of the work, which will completely cover the cut edges and make a firm line of mounting all round.

CHAPTER IV

Stitches—Working of Gold Thread—Figure-work—General Rules

Stitches

THE stitches for working with gold threads are different from those required for silk threads, and come under the terms *couching* or *laid work*. With the many stitches used in wool for secular embroideries we are not here concerned. The modern stitches used for Church work are the same as those which fashioned the magnificent productions of pre-Reformation days.

The danger of using too many stitches in a given space, thereby producing a restless effect, is to be guarded against.

The principal one, called *Embroidery*, or *long and short* stitch, the one formerly

known as *opus plumarium* from its resemblance to the feathers of a bird, is, as its name implies, long and short stitches worked into each other; it looks practically the same, when done, on both sides of the stuff, and should lie smooth and even when skilfully done by a practised hand. The stitches should never be longer than three-eighths of an inch.

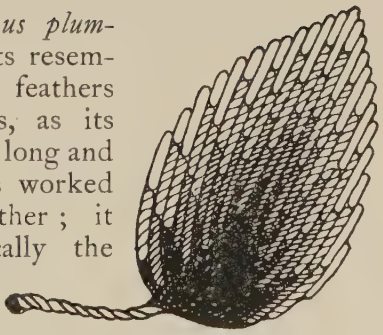


Fig. 1. Long and Short Stitch.

Satin stitch is most effective for showing-off the gloss of the silk;

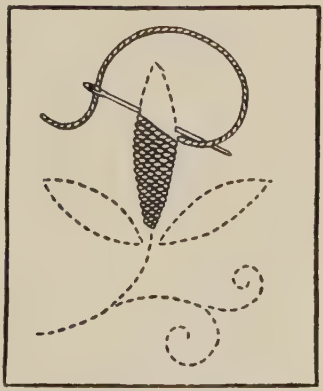


Fig. 2. Satin Stitch.

it is only used for lettering or raised work, and lies in parallel lines, the two sides being again replicas.

Chain stitch is made by bringing the silk round the needle whilst it is still in the fabric, thus making each little loop grow out of the last.

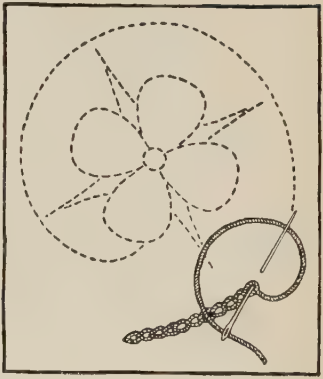


Fig. 3. Chain Stitch.

Crewel or *stem* or *outline* stitch makes a line by means of a long stitch forward and a shorter one back on the underside. The size of stitch varies according to the purpose

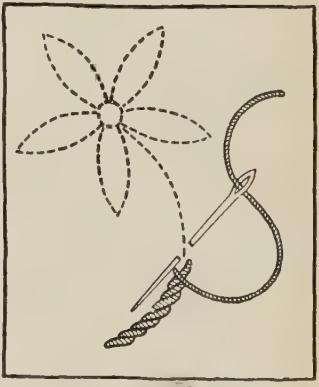


Fig. 4. Crewel Stitch.

for which the outline is wanted, but in all cases it must be very small—about one-sixteenth of an inch—so that the result produced is a fine clean line.

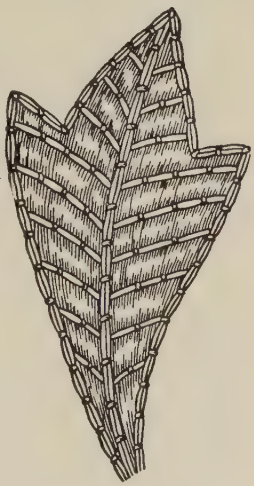


Fig. 5. Spanish Stitch.

Spanish stitch, or *couching in floss*, is very useful in Church embroidery; in much old work entire designs are carried out in it, but in modern work it is more often used for backgrounds, and is very quick and effective. In this stitch all the floss lies on the surface, and should be taken backwards and forwards; care must be exercised to see that each strand is entirely without twist on it, as it cannot be stroked on account of the floss going both ways. In working it is wiser

to bring the floss down slightly inside the outside line and to bring the needle up on the line, so that the floss lies very close and danger of bringing up the previous stitch avoided. When all the ground is covered in this way, it should be crossed by lines either in silk or gold in the manner described in the sewing down of gold thread. When drapery is done in this stitch, the shading is put in the background, but it does not give such a satisfactory effect for draperies as *long and short* stitch.

French knots are probably of Eastern origin, as they first occur in Western work in the thirteenth century. They are useful for stamens of flowers, etc., and are made by twisting

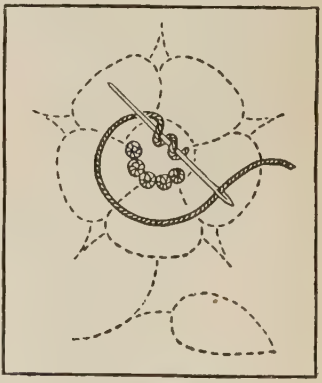


Fig. 6. French Knots.

ANGLE OF CHALICE VEIL

showing flowers and ribbons worked in Spanish stitch ; the stems and scrolls are in silver basket stitch.

the needle round the thread held taut, then on pulling the needle through at the back a knot is left in accordance with the number of the times it has been twisted.

The great beauty of floss-work is to keep it glossy and without any twist on it; when worked it should resemble a satin surface, but, alas! it very often gives the impression of being worked in rough wool.

Couching or Laid Work

Gold thread can be couched on to the material by two distinct methods: one of them in use at the present day, the other one that was commonly practised in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. About the second half of the fourteenth century the earlier method was supplanted by the present one, which is the only possible way of using the paper gold.

In laid or couched work two strands of gold should be always sewn down together, and a single thread is only used in excep-

tional circumstances. The best silk for couching gold is one fine but strong, and twisted ; it may be of any colour desired. A deep orange is often used ; it imparts a warm, rich tint to the gold, while cooler colours, such as green, give a less vivid effect. Care should be taken not to pinch the gold strands in sewing them down, and this is avoided by not drawing the hand too tight. It is most important to work the gold evenly and not show the material between the lines ; this is accomplished by bringing up the needle at an even distance from the last line, leaving just the width of the gold ; and in pricking down, instead of keeping the needle straight, slant it under the previous line, which draws the strands together and makes an even surface. This will ensure the gold being kept quite flat and also firmly in place. When starting the gold, each strand should be sewn down separately, and also when turning a corner this should be done, and when the stitch is

drawn taut the gold should be taken in the finger and turned sharply back in order to make the turning-point neat. The commonest form of stitching the gold is in *bricks*, each couching-stitch being in between the two stitches of the preceding line. (Fig. 7.)

Fig. 7.

For ordinary bricking use about ten stitches to the inch, but much depends upon the design. Care must be taken in stitching down gold that the stitches are quite straight across and not slanted.

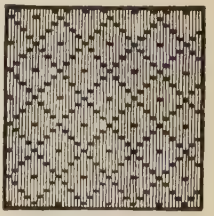


Fig. 8.

There are varieties of patterns which can be produced in the gold ground by varying the position of the couching-stitches, e.g., wavy, diagonal, diaper, diamond, square, or triangular. These different-patterned grounds emphasize and

give a rich effect to parts of a design. In every case, if a good effect is desired, the work must be even and symmetrical, and in diaper patterns the stitches must be kept an even distance apart. (Fig. 8.)

For outlining the ornament, two strands are always used sewn down together, with the stitches about eight to the inch ; but there are circumstances, such as outlining fine letters or minute parts, by which the detail would be spoilt by too thick a line.

When drapery effects are worked in paper gold, several shades of sewing-down silk are used, and the effects of light and shade and folds are entirely arrived at, as in shaded gold, by the use of the colours used in stitches placed close together.

The Ancient Method of Couching

M. de Farcy draws special attention to the beautiful old method of couching,[1]

[1] L. de Farcy, *La Broderie*.

referred to previously. It was always employed for gold, but the silk ground of the Syon cope is entirely done in the same manner. De Farcy gave it the name of *point couche rentré ou retiré*, or shortly, *point retiré*; he strongly advocates its revival, and points out advantages it has over the method now in use. The durability is very great, owing to the couching-thread being on the reverse side, where it is protected from wear and tear, and, being out of sight, can be made strong and durable. If a thread is accidentally broken, it does not give way along an entire line, as may easily happen in the present method. A proof of this point can be seen upon the Ascoli cope—the early couching worked entirely over the background of the cope is in a state of perfect preservation; portions of the gold thread drapery have here and there been couched by the other method, the tying-down threads have in those parts mostly disappeared, and the

gold hangs loose and ragged upon the surface. By the way in which it is worked, there results a particularly pleasing and even surface, agreeably varied by play of light and shade.

Another advantage of the ancient method is that the completed work is very flexible; this point will appeal to those who have experienced the extreme stiffness of a large surface of ordinarily-couched metal threads. Flexibility is an invaluable quality for any work destined, like copes and curtains, to hang in folds. Representations of draperies upon figures are well expressed, for by the way in which they are worked, there comes an indentation along the lines marking the folds; this emphasizes them rather happily, and also breaks up the surface in a satisfactory manner. To all appearance there is upon the surface a kind of satin stitch worked in gold passing, the stitches carrying out some geometrical pattern, such as a chevron or lattice; but at the back a linen thread is seen running to and fro in close

parallel lines in the same direction as the surface thread, and at regular intervals encircled by the gold passing, just as if this was intended to couch down the linen thread. In order to try the couching, a two-fold ground material must be firmly stretched in an embroidery frame, a strong linen underneath, and a thinner closely-woven one upon the upper side. Some fine gold passing and some strong linen thread, well waxed, are required to work with, also an embroidery needle with long eye and sharp point, the size, which is important, depending upon the thread in use ; the needle has to pierce the two-fold ground material, making a hole only just large enough for the passage of a double gold thread. If the linen has a regular, even thread, the drawn pattern shown in diagram on next page can be worked by counting the threads of the ground fabric, but if this is difficult or impossible, as in the case, say, of twilled surface, a careful tracing must be made upon the linen ;

PORTION OF ORPHREY showing gold worked in *point retiré*.

Plate 20.

a beginner may find this the easier way in any case. The end of the gold thread must be passed through to the back at the starting-point. The linen thread secures it at the back and then comes through to the front upon the traced line exactly beneath, it then encircles the gold thread, which the left hand holds rather tautly, and returns by the same hole to the back, pulling the metal through with it. There is knack in taking the gold thread only just through and leaving the completed stitch straight and flat upon the surface. The process is now repeated, the linen coming through to the front again upon the next traced line, and so on. When the base of the

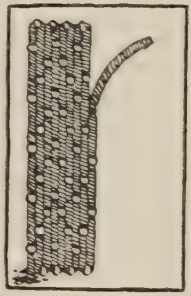


Fig. 9.

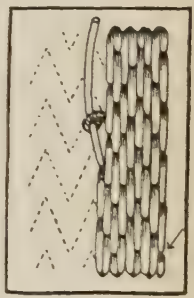


Fig. 10.

pattern is reached the gold thread is taken through once upon that line, and then commences a like journey upwards. This practice explains the couching; variety is obtained by change of pattern, but the method of carrying it out is always the same. (Figs. 9 and 10.)

The aim in the working is to get each stitch perfectly flat and straight in its correct place in spite of the obstinacy of the metal thread; to avoid making the perforation larger than necessary, for this makes the work clumsy; to make each succeeding line lie closely beside the last one, for the surface must be of solid gold, and if the ground showed through in places it would impoverish the effect. The direction of the couched thread is usually either vertical or horizontal, and it may be both of these in the same piece of work. The reason of this may be because it is worked by counting the threads of the fabric, or because the pattern is always treated as a diaper, and

placed upon the surface without regard to contour. The exception to this rule of direction is when the couching is taken along a stem or narrow hem of a robe to form the border, or along a girdle ; it then follows the direction of the band.[1]

Study of the old work will become of greater interest when this method of working is understood. Also it is still employed when, for any reason, metal threads have to be used.

Raised Gold

When the effect of light and shade is desired, raised parts or lines are often used ; padding can be placed in forms such as lozenges, or string arranged in lines to form various raised diapers, wicker basket, or other patterns. Care should be taken that the padding should be even and symmetrical, according to the shape desired, as it is impossible to do

[1] The above description of couching is taken from *Embroidery and Weaving*, Mrs. A. H. Christie.

good gold work over bad padding. If a large surface is to be covered, layers of yellow cloth are the best medium to employ, but macramé string should be used for line work. (Figs. 11 and 12.)

The padding must first be sewn down firmly in the desired form, and in using string or cotton they should never cross, but must be cut off and started again. In finishing off the strands of gold thread each strand must be sewn down separately, as in starting, and cut off quite close; but this method is only sufficient if other gold threads, forming another portion of the design, will cover the raw edge; otherwise, after sewing down the last stitch, the gold thread must be cut off, leaving about

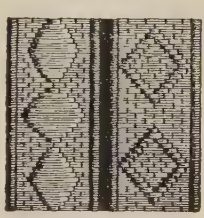


Fig. 11.

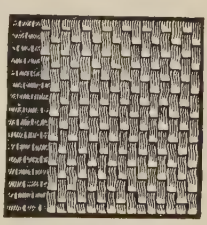


Fig. 12.

half an inch to thread through a large-eyed needle, and this must be drawn carefully through the linen to the back side; the needle is then withdrawn, leaving the half-inch or so of gold thread on the underneath side, and this loose end will be kept quite firm when the work is pasted at the back on completion. In working a narrow band of gold—such as over one line of string—a single strand is used, the stitch placed on each side of the string, and the gold thread turned sharply backwards and forwards; that is, sewn in even lines over each single thread which makes the bar-like effect.

Shaded Gold

Late in the fourteenth century the Continental workers started a form of embroidery that reached its zenith in the sixteenth, when English ecclesiastical work was in abeyance. Though this method had never become popular in England, it is however sometimes used for draperies

in figure work. It consisted of couching the ground with gold, and closely sewing over two threads at a time with coloured silks; the effect was to block the metal out almost entirely in the shadows, gradually spacing the silk wider apart for the gold to show through in the half tints, and leaving it quite clear in the high lights. The effect produced by infinite patience and skill somewhat approximates to the woven gold of the Cologne orphreys.

For this kind of work several shades of the colour desired, from light to dark, are used; to get good effects for the deepest shadows the stitches almost touch each other.

Figure-work

There is nothing in Church embroidery which gives a wider scope for difference of treatment and opinion than figure-work. Some still affect the early school of wooden faces and stiff draperies; others the long-drawn Byzan-

tine figures ; but in the opinion of the writer the most effective form of figure-work is that which, whilst preserving a due amount of conventional treatment and simplicity of shading, approaches most nearly to a painter's ideal. Some workers produce the effect of folds, light, or shade by the rounding and curving of their stitches, while others produce these effects entirely by light and shade, and keep all their stitches straight up and down ; this latter method is the better way. When drapery is done with Japanese gold several shades of sewing-silk are used, and the stitches are much closer, and done to the pattern of the design.

Faces. Worked faces are quite the most difficult work in Church embroidery ; there are various methods employed by different schools, but the one most approved by the writer is to copy the faces often seen on ancient embroidery, and work the stitches straight down, depending entirely on the shading to give the round effect. Very

fine silk is used called "tram," so fine that, generally, three threads are used together. Of course, great care must be taken in preparing the frame, mounting it with two layers of fine white linen, which must not be scalded. Trace the features with a fine paint-brush before outlining them with dark brown silk in fine crewel stitch, so fine that it makes a firm even thin line. Then proceed to work in the face, using the *long and short* stitch, as in other embroidery, but very small stitches, less than one-eighth of an inch in length, and being careful to keep them quite straight. For good face-work a knowledge of drawing and painting, if not absolutely necessary, is at least desirable, as so much depends on the feeling and expression worked in, which is something that can be achieved, but is taught with difficulty. It is the few that can work faces, as compared with the many who can do other parts with success. Some schools aim at putting neither colour nor expression in faces, but

Applique Work. (See list.)

it is the opinion of the writer that the most satisfactory results are obtained by using one's silks as one does paints, and trying to get a natural effect. About four shades of silk are enough for flesh work.

General Method

There are different methods — they cannot be called rules — of laying the stitches in embroidery. The upper sides of any form, upon which the light falls, should always be worked in a lighter shade. The shades in scrolls, leaves, and conventional forms should be few and clearly distinguished from each other. In working leaves and scrolls, the stitches should almost always be taken in a slanting direction. The edges of leaves are usually worked first, and the dark shade filled into the centre vein afterwards. To embroider shaded objects in straight stitches on the satin-stitch principle is wrong. Veins of leaves, whether of gold

or silk, should always be worked last; and where a line of gold, is carried through a leaf, it should not be wrought till the silk embroidery is perfected. Edging the needlework should be the final operation, and it should be executed with great care, for a clumsy outline will seriously affect the value of either the most elaborate couching, or the finest embroidery in long and short stitch.

CHAPTER V

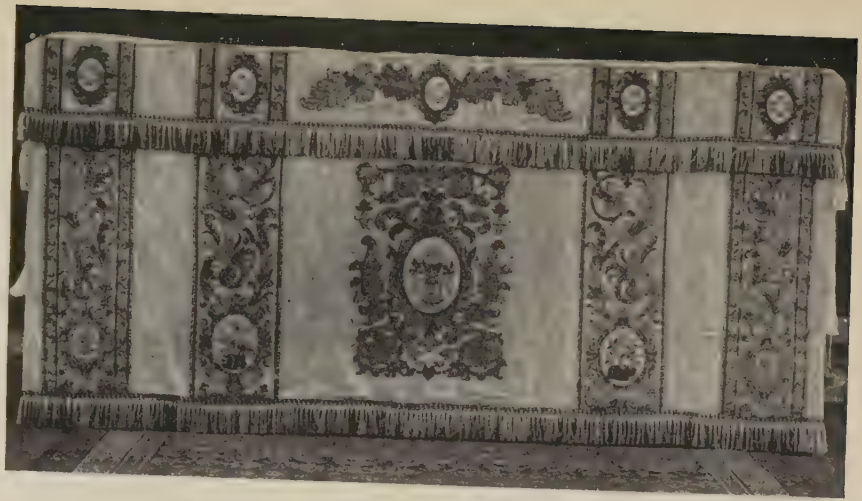
Appliqué Work—Inlaid Work—Heraldic Work—Lettering

Appliqué or Applied Work

UNDER the present heading is meant the sewing of one material on to another, in contradistinction to the application of an embroidered ornament. Applied work may be thought hardly to come under the heading of embroidery, but it runs into it, and is so frequently enhanced by the addition of some embroidery, that it is well to draw attention to it. There are many churches, poor both in means and workers, where a simple form of ornamentation is desired. Mr. Lewis Day puts the claims of

appliqué admirably as follows: "Appliqué is especially appropriate to bold Church work, fulfilling perfectly that condition of legibility so desirable in work necessarily seen oftenest from afar. Broadly designed, it may be as fine in its way as a piece of mediaeval stained glass, and it gives to silk and velvet their true worth. The pattern may be readable as far off as you can distinguish colour.

"Appliqué work is thought by some to be an inferior kind of embroidery, which it is not. It is not lower, but another kind of needlework in which more is made of the stuff than of the stitching. In it the craft of the needleworker is not carried to its limit, but, on the other hand, it makes great demands upon design. You cannot begin by just throwing about sprays of natural flowers. It calls peremptorily for treatment — by which test the decorative artist stands or falls. Effective it must be; coarse



ALTAR FRONTAL AT PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL. (See list.)

Plate 22.

it may be; vulgar it should not be; trivial it can hardly be; mere prettiness is beyond its scope; but it lends itself to dignity of design and nobility of treatment. Of course, it is not popular." [1]

In some cases light sprays worked on the ground, from parts of the applied design, prevent the pattern from looking too detached from its surroundings; or running lines of gold threads or spangles are sometimes added.

Appliqué work in the old days was known as *opus consutum*, of which there is frequent mention in inventories; it probably embraced patchwork and inlaid work also. Appliqué was always much favoured for domestic hangings, and it reached its zenith in Italy and Spain at the time of the Renaissance, when beautiful arabesques were cut out in velvet and silk, and applied to rich grounds with varieties of stitches and

[1] Lewis F. Day, *Art in Needlework*.

braidings. Foreign examples can be seen in the V. and A. Museum, which might very well be copied for church hangings.[1]

For appliqué ornaments the material to be used should be first pasted on muslin before the design is traced and worked; when cut out apply to the groundwork with small stitches taken from the ground into the appliqué at right angles (Fig. 13) to the edge. The outline may be slightly shaded sometimes by lines of crewel-stitch especially for draperies, or satin stitch produces a good effect to bind the edges, either flat or over strands of silk, or again, a cord can be couched round the edge.

Fig. 13.

[1] For illustrations of the very curious English appliqué hangings of the late sixteenth century, at Hardwick, see *English Secular Embroidery*, M. Jourdain.

Inlaid Work

Another species of work, where economy of rich stuff is an object, is the counter-change of colour—cutting a pattern out of two colours and the inlaying each on to the other in the same manner that *Boulle* furniture is made.

To do this the material should be super-imposed and cut out to the pattern, then laid in position on a foundation to which they are tacked. All the edges are then joined together with an overcast stitch which must not pierce the foundation so that it cannot be removed if required. The edges can have a cord or braid couched to hide the stitches.

"There is in Perugia a church which possesses a complete set of draperies of this description, that were made at a good period for this work—early sixteenth century—and evidently were designed for the position they occupy. On festivals, the piers, pulpit, and parts of the wall are

hung with these rose and gold coloured hangings of inlaid work. The design is a conventional scroll pattern, and the various hangings have alternately the rose ground with gold pattern, and gold ground with rose pattern—the whole forming a rich and harmonious interchange of colour." [1]

Heraldic Work

Frequent use of shields bearing coats-of-arms formed a great feature in mediaeval decoration, and of late there has been a revival of interest and appreciation of their use. Heraldic bearings are absolutely conventional, and it is imperative that they must be drawn by a person conversant with the subject.[2] The shields

[1] Mrs. A. H. Christie, *Embroidery and Tapestry Weaving.*

[2] Any person desirous of drawing or working coats-of-arms should study *Decorative Heraldry*, G. W. Eve.

SPANISH COUNTERCHANGE WORK OF SILK AND VELVET. (See page 134.)

were often done in *tent* stitch (a half-cross stitch) on canvas, but also were most effectively, and are now frequently, blazoned correctly with greater ease by means of applied work of different colours —e.g., an *azure* field is obtained by a shield-shaped piece of blue material, and the charges worked directly on in their proper colours. If of fur they may be expressed with real skin—for instance, a white mouse's coat was recently used as the foundation of ermine in a cope for Norwich.[1]

An example of heraldic applied work of the thirteenth century is in the British Museum—a fragment of the surcoat of William, third Earl of Albemarle—which shows a black lion couched on a gold field with a double gold thread.

Vestments ornamented with the arms, badge, or initials of their donors were not uncommon, and we read that Philip, King

[1] Designed by Mr. St. John Hope, worked by Miss Harvey.

of France, bestowed on Canterbury a suit of red samite with orphreys of France—that is, blue, with gold fleur-de-lis—and a rich suit of blue cloth, with golden fleur-de-lis.

At the same time (1315), there were five copes of Katharine Lovel, "sewn with the arms of divers persons," a white cope with the arms of the King of Scotland, and an albe sewn with the arms of Northwood and Poynings in squares.

Of existing specimens, the shields on the Syon cope will be remembered.

Lettering

Lettering can be made very effective with well designed Roman letters, or with those of the Lombardic or Gothic alphabet. An inscription can be made into a decorative border, as round the eleventh-century cope of S. Henry, at Bamberg[1]; or single letters which stand for a meaning can be

[1] Illustrated in *La Broderie*, L. de Farcy.

made into an effective ornament, especially when simplicity in work or pattern is desired ; they will serve either as a ground powdering or in a combined design.[1]

It is perhaps needless to add that a mediaeval phase of stringing letters together as mere ornament, with no meaning, should not be copied.

When carried out in silk, letters are most effective if raised slightly with cotton padding, and worked in *satin* stitch to give a plain bold effect. If executed in gold they are best worked flat with raised bosses or lines at intervals to catch the light.[2]

[1] Such as A.—the *litera salutaris* ; A and Ω—*Alpha and Omega*, etc. Letters and initials figure among the many ornaments on vestments in old inventories.

[2] For alphabets refer to *Alphabets*, E. F. Strange ; *Alphabets Old and New*, L. F. Day.

CHAPTER VI

Design and principal Modern Uses of Embroidery

Importance of design. The weakness of modern design. Secular *motifs* in early Church work. The principal modern uses of ecclesiastical embroideries. Copes, Chasubles, Dalmatics and Tunicles, Stoles and Maniples, Amice and Apparels, Altar Frontals and Hangings, Banners, Burses.

Design

A FUNDAMENTAL element of all Art is Design—of the first moment, either in the highest or most trivial forms—and carried through from the bald outline to the last detail of any work. Whether it is a building, a picture, a jewel, or a vestment or hanging, design must be there to make a successful issue

possible. In minor arts it can be more easily recognized on account of their greater simplicity, but in great productions there is so much else apparent, that the presence of design is apt to escape notice ; nevertheless, in its correct presentment lies the foundation of the harmonious whole which must be sought after.

Design may be defined as the arrangement of the masses and lines which make up the external forms of any work however large or small. The masses and lines must be regarded both for their own sake and in relation to one another to produce unity of effect.

It is an obvious principle that the beauty of any object or apparel lies primarily in its shape and colour, the ornamentation of the surface being a secondary matter. That this principle has been gradually slipping out of sight since the end of the fifteenth century is plain to any one who studies the old

vestments either in sculpture, monumental brasses, or illuminated MSS. The craze for overloaded decoration that set in at that time caused grace of line to be sacrificed to heavy stiff ornament. Many of the altar hangings and vestments made in recent years are spoilt by their ornamentation, and would be far better if every bit of it were stripped off. Quite superb ones can be made without a stitch of embroidery, if of good colour, and well cut of suitable material.

Thus, not only in ornament but in shape, we suffer in design for Church needlework from a greater breach with tradition than in the case of any other art, because the production of ecclesiastical embroidery was cut short by the Reformation. No really important piece of Church work was begun after the first half of the sixteenth century. As a result Church embroidery is frequently frigid and rigid in design — a mere *rechauffé* of stock

symbols, or a misdirected attempt at pictorial effects; as it is also hard and mechanical in execution, whether worked by amateurs or professionals.

It is perhaps hardly necessary to insist further on the primal importance of design in dealing with Church needlework. It is evident from a study of the stump work of the Stuart period, that mere technical skill, however remarkable, cannot redeem bad taste in design. Now, in the first place, the designer is called upon to treat his ornament with boldness, and without naturalism. The objects depicted must be read clearly at once in a firm, graphic manner; and frequently a bold outline is necessary. The distant effect of altar frontal, hanging, and vestment must be ever present in the mind of the designer, even where the needlework is of the most minute and delicate character. The great copes of English workmanship of the late thirteenth century are effective on a distant view (or in a small photograph)

owing to the skilful contrasts of colour which emphasize the architectural or geometrical basis of the design (such as the arcading, the arrangement of circles or quatrefoils, etc.), though the refinement of the needlework can only be appreciated on closer inspection.

It must be confessed that our figure subjects on needlework are unsatisfactory; and they compare with ancient work as modern stained glass with early masterpieces in that medium. The pictorial is not the form of design best suited to embroidery, and figures, unless conventionalized and treated with severe simplicity are bound to be unsatisfactory. Certain characteristics of figures represented in *opus anglicanum*—the unnatural colour of the hair and beard, the pinky-brown monochrome which stands for the flesh-tints, the bold black or dark brown outline of the features, the drawing of the eye, the angular attitudes of the bodies, the broad masses of drapery enclosed in

THE BISHOP OF LONDON'S COPE. (See list.)

harmoniously flowing, sharply marked lines, all tend to remove the work from naturalism to a conventional treatment, and do not exclude a venerableness and dignity in the figures, and a genuine religious spirit which later and more correctly designed work does not always possess. In this convention our modern designers have, perhaps naturally, not dared to follow the artists of the Middle Ages.

With regard to ornamental motifs introduced, we cannot but admire the wider field of the early work, the freshness and richness of invention, the intrusion, we may say, of the secular.

By the 1540 inventory of Canterbury, the last of the great religious houses to be suppressed by Henry VIII, we can illustrate that the ornament of the ecclesiastical vestments was almost more frequently secular in design than ecclesiastical. We have, for instance, copes embroidered

with griffins,[1] with columbines,[2] flowers-de-luces,[3] eagles,[4] water-flowers,[5] oak-leaves,[6] pheasants and hawks,[7] crowns and white harts,[8] red hinds,[9] vestments embroidered with fishes,[10] swans,[11] albes

[1] One cope of blew damaske w^th^ griffons embroidered of Venice gold.

[2] One cope of white damaske embroidered w^th^ columbyns.

[3] ij Copes of blew velvet embroidered w^t^ floure de lyces.

[4] One good cope of redde velvet with Egels.

[5] One old cope of purple velvet with a water floure of Venice golde w^th^ orpheras embroidered.

[6] One cope of grene silke w^th^ holme leves and orpheras embroidered.

[7] ij copes of blew baudekyn golde w^th^ fesaunts and hawks and orpheras embroidered.

[8] vj copes of grene baudekyn w^t^ riche orpheras w^t^ crounes and white hartes.

[9] iiij copes of white sateen baudekyn w^th^ redde hindes.

[10] Vestment decon and sub d. of white silke broidered with fisshes.

[11] iiij vestments of Sateen figurie w^th^ orpheras embroidered w^th^ swaunes of venice golde.

J. Wickham Legg and W. H. St. J. Hope, *Inventories of Christ Church, Canterbury*.

worked with tigers,[1] eagles, and with birds.[2]

Copes

The cope is the processional robe of an ecclesiastic. It is the only vestment which may be embroidered all over, as the stiffness is not so material, though the weight has still to be considered. Frequently when wearing a heavy cope, possibly of cloth of gold with worked orphreys, ecclesiastical dignitaries had to have train-bearers to support the sides. Mostly, however, the cope is of rich material with embroidered orphreys and hood. This last should have a set figure subject, generally our Lord in Glory. In pre-Reformation days the Assumption or

[1] One albe of Sarcenet garnisshed wth red silke with tygres and Egels of venice gold . . .

[2] One albe of white caffa w^{t} byrdes garnished w^{t} fine needlework.

J. Wickham Legg and W. H. St. J. Hope, *Inventories of Christ Church, Canterbury*.

Coronation of the Virgin were favourite devices. The usual shape for the hood, originally meant as a real head-covering, is an inverted four-centred arch. It is now merely a flat piece of embroidery, and should measure not more than 18 ins. across the top, and 21 in depth. The orphrey runs the length of the front edge of the cope, the pattern dividing at the neck to fall right way up each side. The morse, or clasp, is sometimes embroidered, if not of metal. The orphrey in mediaeval times was "shaped," i.e., it was curved, so as not to stand stiffly over the shoulders; and the two sides, as a result, hung straight in front. Dr. Dearmer has recovered the old pattern[1] after a study of old brasses and such artists as Fra Angelico; this is much more beautiful than the stiff garment with broad, straight orphreys which are so conspicuous in the pictures of such artists as Rubens.

[1] Illustrated (fig. 5) in *The Parson's Handbook*, and Plates 13 and 14 in *Ornaments of the Ministers*.

BRASS EFFIGY SHOWING SHAPED COPE. (See list.)

The cope should be a cycloid in shape, not a semicircle ; for instance, if its right length behind be 5 ft., it should measure 11 ft. along its straight edge—or a good measurement is 10 ft. 6 ins. × 17 ft., while the orphrey should be from 4 to 9 ins. wide.

If it is desired to embroider the whole of the vestment, that part which falls from the width of the shoulders to the heels, and lies with few folds when worn, was chosen to receive the most interesting scenes of the design in early times. This is very noticeable in the Syon and Vich copes. The vestment needs no stiffening, but a stout interlining of cotton canvas will be needed for the orphrey and the hood ; the inner edge of the cope and hood may be fringed, but it is not necessary, especially for the cope.

So much has been said as to the embroidery on old copes that further description is unnecessary, except to suggest that, if for any reason a hood of elaborate work

is unobtainable, it can be omitted and simpler work used ; for instance, a design approximating to that on a vestment at Rheims Cathedral, could be carried out in either appliqué or gold couching, which would make a very effective back to a cope or chasuble. It was described in 1622 as *Une chasuble de satin rouge, avec orfroi en mode d'arbres, couverts de petites marguerites et de perles, brodés a l'entour d'une petite bande d'or.* We can compare it with the boldly-designed ironwork on doors, and the "flower," described later, on chasubles. On a gold ground are fine tracings in pearls ; the place of these small stones is taken to-day by gold thread (guipé) in relief. Bénoit, an English abbot, gave a similar chasuble to his monastery in 1184. *Sextam de nigro panno, principalem cum arboribus ante et retro lapidibus pretiosis a summo usque ad deorsum plenam.*[1]

[1] The gift of Guillaume de Joinville, d. 1299. Illustrated in *La Broderie*, L. de Farcy.

Chasubles

The chasuble, as at first used in England, was of a full, rounded shape, with little or no embroidery ; but side by side with the use of the pointed arch in architecture, the *vesica piscis* shape gradually developed. The circular or early form of the chasuble degenerated in the seventeenth century on the Continent into what is known as the fiddle-back pattern, owing to the taste for gold embroidery, which rendered it too stiff to fall in folds, and too heavy to set on the shoulders in the old way.[1] It would appear from the evidence of monuments that it was never so cut in England, but retained its proper shape till the Reformation. The chasubles of English work now remaining of the fiddle shape have been probably all cut for use in the Roman Church in later days.

[1] For information on this and other vestments, see *The Ornaments of the Ministers*, in this series, by the Rev. Dr. Percy Dearmer.

Plate 26.

Photo] [*W. R. Grove, Esq., M.B.*

MODERN CHASUBLE. (See list.)

Originally, the first ornamentation on the chasuble (always called the vestment in old inventories) was a border round the opening for the head and neck ; by the twelfth century, judging by the chasuble called "of S. Thomas of Canterbury," at Sens, it was ornamented with narrow bands or orphreys, not worked but laid on, and mostly enclosing the neck with a Y back and front, in which the enclosed space was embroidered with the "flower" —that is, a Transitional pattern of stiff foliage, somewhat resembling strapwork ; the same class of pattern occurs in illuminations. Often the straight orphrey down the front resembled a T cross, and was used both with and without the "flower."

After the close of the twelfth century the "flower" was discontinued, and the orphreys were richly embroidered and often jewelled, while a border frequently ran all round the edge.

The heavy overloaded Latin cross came in late in the fourteenth century, and

later took up so much space that the Y disappeared altogether. The De la Mare brass at St. Albans (*c.* 1360) is Flemish, but it shows a chasuble with rich T cross and Y orphreys and border. As—unlike copes—scarce any remain, it is from monuments and illuminations that information is to be gathered of the designs; inventories seldom give more than the colouring.

A good length for a chasuble is 50 ins. behind, and breadth at the widest part about 48 ins. or wider, so that the sides of the vestment reach nearly to the wrists. They do not want any interlining, and stiffening only spoils their folds and makes them heavy. The silk lining is sometimes made three-quarters of an inch longer than the stuff, turned up on the outside all round, and tacked down under an ornamental band or braid. It is undesirable that the vestment should be embroidered all over, but the "flower" might well be restored; it should be

worked on separate silk and laid down—the shoulder orpheys will cover the join. The Y orphreys were called pectoral and dorsal from their respective positions, and the side ones humeral. They and the border can be suitably embroidered with a scroll work or other small design, or may be simply of plain bands of silk, satin, or velvet of not more than 2 to 3 ins. in width.

Dalmatics and Tunicles

"The dalmatic, for the gospeller or deacon, should have real sleeves, and not the mere epaulettes which have rendered the dalmatic almost undistinguishable from the chasuble. In some of the most beautiful examples the sleeves reach to the wrist, and the vestment itself touches the ground. In any case the sleeve should at the shortest reach the elbow, and the vestment should be as long as the chasuble." [1]

[1] Percy Dearmer, *The Parson's Handbook*.

The tunicle for the epistoler or subdeacon only differs from the dalmatic in that it has a tendency to be less ornamental, and has comparatively narrow sleeves. Both vestments are of the same colour as the chasuble of the suit, and may be either lined or unlined, plain or orphreyed. The orphreys may consist of two narrow strips from the shoulders to the hem, which is their early form ; or they may be simply one pillar. Square patches—apparels—of rich material are sometimes inserted between the orphreys.

The only remaining ancient dalmatics are not in England or of English work, so again recourse must be had to other evidence to show the ancient forms. They were occasionally embroidered or of brocaded stuff, more frequently with a worked border, and slit up the sides—all the edges having a fringe. In 1321, at Canterbury, there were some, very sumptuous : one pair, formerly Lanfranc's, had the dalmatic of dark blue fretted

with gold, and the tunicle embroidered with stars and golden beasts in circles. Another pair were embroidered in gold with double-headed eagles, and beasts and golden trees of applied work respectively. Another pair is described as having four rows of orphreys both back and front. This mode was the original decoration in early days—going back to the *clavi* of the classical times. Later, in 1540, there is a long list of ordinary sets (vestment, deacon and subdeacon), nearly all richly embroidered: "One vestment, decon and subdeacon of stolework wt. armes whereof the vestment and one deacon very rich"; others of rich materials with gold "angells," "lyons," "honysocles of pearls," "floure de lyces," etc.

Stoles and Maniples

Stoles and maniples may be taken together, as they should be made to match. The stole is a strip of stuff about

9 to 10 ft. long, and should be not more than 3 ins. wide, with splayed and fringed ends. Modern stoles are generally made too broad. The spade end is an ugly, modern pattern. A properly embroidered stole is completely covered from end to end. The crosses decorating the ends are of modern introduction, for, down to the seventeenth century, crosses, when they were used, were applied continuously to the whole length of the stole, as was the case with other ornamentation.

The maniple should be narrow and splayed, without crosses, and fringed like the stole. A good length is 3 ft. 4 in., and it should be of the same width and decoration as the stole. Both stole and maniple should be stiffened.

The Durham, Canterbury, and Worcester fragments, previously described, denote a usual form of decoration for stoles and maniples. They were frequently sumptuously embroidered with gold and silver threads and knots, with pearls, with plates

of gold or with jewels, also with coloured silks. The longitudinal scroll pattern seemed naturally the most desirable for the long narrow shape of these vestments ; the interstices filled with little roses, knots, or other devices. One pair at Canterbury (1321) was appliqué, another ornamented with standing figures, probably of the same kind as the orphreys used so much for copes, of which, when Bishop Pudsey died at Durham, among the furniture of his private chapel were "stoles embroidered with kings and towers." This sort of design, however, was unsuitable, and therefore little used.

Another class of stole was the heraldic pattern, as described previously,[1] and of which there was at Canterbury a pair with the vestments given by Katharine Lovel, "sewn with the arms of divers persons" ; and a pair with the addition of purple frets accompanied an albe of the same of Richard de Clive. Many good modern stoles of

[1] *ante* p. 68.

varied design have been made. It is not necessary that more than the ends should be ornamented, where work is a consideration. Where the design is for the whole stole the ends should be emphasized with a different pattern ; if liked, a figure is quite suitable at the terminations.

Representations of mediaeval stoles are scarce owing to the fact of their being almost invariably covered, with the exception of the extreme ends which appear beneath the chasuble. The patterns seen are mostly of interlacing lines, and often the fringes are knotted in frets. Maniples of the same designs are to be observed on most of the ecclesiastical monuments.

Amices and Apparels

The amice itself may be considered to be embroidered, or more properly it is ornamented with an apparel as a collar. The apparels are therefore five in number —on the amice, on the front and back

of the albe immediately above the hem, and on the outside of the sleeves at the cuff.

"Apparels are so beautiful a feature in the English ceremonial that it is the more regrettable that some clergy have discarded them, merely, it would seem, because they are now forbidden at Rome. The amice apparel should be stiffer than the others, collar canvas is a good interlining. The albe apparels may be interlined with linen if the material has little substance. All should be lined with white or blue linen, and they generally need an edging of cord or braid. The dimensions vary: the following are recommended for men, but boys' apparels should be rather smaller—amice apparel 22 in. × 3 in.; sleeve 8 or 9 in. × from 3 or $3\frac{1}{2}$ in.; skirt 8 × 10 or 12 in."[1]

Apparels are pieces of rich, distinct coloured material of any description that looks well with the vestments, and they

[1] Percy Dearmer, *The Parson's Handbook*.

need not follow the colour of the day. They may be plain, but are more suitable when worked. In pre-Reformation days they were heavily embroidered and often had a stole and maniple to match them of the same sort of ornament as already described—of velvet or satin embroidered with gold and jewels in all kinds of varied devices. Especially at Canterbury they are described as ornamented with "water flowers."

Altar Frontals and Hangings

It is notable that though so much work was lavished on vestments we learn both by illuminations[1] and inventories that embroidered altar hangings were in the minority. They were made of various materials, but for the most part of silks and velvets frequently "paled," that is,

[1] For illustrations of pre-Reformation altars see *English Altars*, W. H. St. John Hope; and *Fifty Pictures of Gothic Altars*, Percy Dearmer (Alcuin Club).

striped of two colours. The embroidery on a frontal would naturally tend towards a central panel, then two side ones divided by two of the pales, which pales became the orphreys.

It is most likely that unless "worked" is specially said of frontals and hangings in inventories that they were not treated with any embroidery, and, if a description of any imagery is attached to them that it was painted or "steyned." Of course in some cases it is open to doubt, for instance in the series at Thame,[1] where the ornament was probably worked; but

[1] Of green Ray silk; of green and red; of blue silk with white harts; of Ray velvet chequered; of red silk with birds and branches; of blue with a frontal and corporas burse of the same pertaining to S. John's altar; a frontal of blue and green baudkyn with flowers of white and red with a cloth of the same to hang above the altar with a crucifix, and two custos (side) riddels for the same altar, one of blue tartyn. An inventory of the Church at Thame, Oxon., in 1447. *Berks, Bucks, and Oxon Arch. Journal*, Vol. xi.

where images and large figure subjects occur—certainly in the smaller churches —the writer inclines to the view that they were painted unless stated otherwise.

Specimen instances of definitely-worked hangings are as follows :—In 1327 Bishop Thomas de Cobham bequeathed to his Cathedral of Worcester among other ornaments a frontal worked with arms. S. Andrew's, Norwich, possessed a cloth of gold for the high altar paled with velvet and powdered with golden eagles. At S. Paul's, in 1402, amongst others, there was a black frontal for the high altar embroidered with figures of the LORD, with the B.V.M. and S. John the Evangelist on either hand. At Canterbury, in 1315, are frontals embroidered with shields, and others with vines. Later a more elaborate one is bequeathed to the cathedral by the Black Prince, one given him by the Bishop of Exeter, having the Assumption of Our Lady in the midst, and other imagery. The extremely in-

ALTAR FRONTAL AT ALVELEY. (See page 80.)

teresting accounts of John Stone give the prices and quantities of stuff used for making frontals and curtains for three altars—a set of blue velvet embroidered with gold archangels, and another of green satin and velvet with red fringe embroidered with gold. In 1540 there was a rich frontal of crimson velvet embroidered with Venice gold; and two "pendants" for the high altar whereof one was of green satin with swans and the other of blue satin with images embroidered, and various others.[1]

The frontlet was frequently of the same material and colour as the frontal, or, on the other hand, one frontlet would perfectly serve for several frontals and form an effective contrast.[2] A plain unem-

[1] J. W. Legg and W. St. John Hope, *Inventories of Christ Church, Canterbury*.

[2] "A purpure cloth with an ymage of the Crucifix with a divers frontlet having in every end two white leopards." *Reg. of Riches in Antiq. Sarisb.*, in 1536.

broidered one of dark colour is indeed a good accentuating line grateful to many tastes.

These frontals and frontlets were finished off with fringes, often of red, white, and green, of which colours there is an entry in the accounts of S. Mary's Church, Sandwich [1]; or, as just quoted from John Stone, the fringes were red to go with green frontals.

The upper frontal or dorsal [2] which hung at the back of the altar frequently matched the frontal, and together they formed a pair. It was sometimes called the reredos, as at Thame, "Reredose of silk for an altar paled with yellow and green with two side curtains of silk with blue Ray."

Riddel originally meant any curtain; in later times it is applied especially to altar curtains. Records of their being embroidered are very scanty, they were

[1] W. Boys' *Hist. of Sandwich.*

[2] From Latin dorsalis.

mostly of white silk or damask or sometimes stained or painted, as was so frequently the case with the upper-frontal.[1] Among the bequests by Bishop Bury to Durham (1345) are two white rayed curtains for the altar.[2]

The embroiderer to-day may work upon brocades of beautiful design, many of the fine examples in the museums being now reproduced with great exactitude. Velvet and damask are also suitable materials. The width of the altar should determine the scale of the ornament.

A frontlet is best with some stiff connected pattern all along, or it looks quite well in plain material.

[1] At Canterbury, 1503—A cloth of linen with a representation of the Crucifixion and the Blessed Mary and S. John and two curtains with the same picture—the gift of Thomas Chart. In 1540—two pair of rich curtains of sarcenet painted, whereof one pair white the other redde.

[2] Surtees Society, *Wills and Inventories*, Pt. 1.

The altar-frontal itself frequently has figure subjects and has in recent times been often designed with a centre and two narrow panels; though a continuous scheme of many panels is far more effective for a well proportioned altar of adequate length: such panels may be either of equal width or alternately broad and narrow.

When it is particularly desired to put work on to dorsals and curtains, (where it is not considered that a rich stuff is sufficient either by itself or with another material in bands), the ground may be powdered with some ornamental motif, or appliqué is eminently suitable.

A point to be observed is on no account to use a frontal stretched on a frame. The easiness and play when it is hung gives light and shade to the colours and relief to the pattern.

Gold fringe is frequently employed for the edges of frontals. Where a silk fringe is desired, the colour must be

carefully considered and it may be spaced at intervals with gold. Needle-point or bobbin lace should never be used, it is utterly out of place in such a position and gives a confused tawdry effect even though it may be of the highest value and workmanship in itself.

There is such considerable ignorance about lace that it is necessary to emphasize how completely it is misused, when applied to church ornamentation. Lace as we understand the term to-day (i.e., needle-point or bobbin—not cut work or embroidery on linen), did not exist in England till after the Reformation. It was therefore never put into an English church till the latter-day Ritualists mistakenly copied the Roman usage. The term "Church Lace" is a modern dealer's term, there was at no period a particular kind used only in the Church. Lace is pre-eminently a flimsy fabric, meant to be looked at near, most suitable for personal adornment, but as thoroughly

out of place in a church as are the terrible images and paper flowers it accompanies on the Continent.[1]

It must be carefully remembered that all altar hangings are to be viewed from a distance—the design, therefore, should be bold and striking, the colours well arranged in masses. An architectural effect must be aimed at, not a thin finicking one, since altar-hangings are really part of the building and should be treated as such.

Banners

The use of banners in festal processions is of ancient origin. Bede relates that S. Augustine and his priests, when they

[1] "Lace" has come latterly to be used in Church work in the same sense as in the upholstery and coach building trades where it is the term for woven braids or galloons used as edgings. It is, however, better to avoid this unnecessary confusion of terms, and to call braids and galloons by their right names.

came to England, carried a silver cross and a banner while they sang the Litany, and on the banner was a figure of our LORD. A banner was one of the requisite ornaments of a Parish Church by the Statutes of Archbishop Peckham (1280), but no old specimens are known to have survived. In many cases they were painted, but at Canterbury there was one of S. Thomas of white silk embroidered, no doubt with the figure of the saint himself. Any rich material of silken texture, or fine cloth, is suitable for the ground. The design of banners is an all-important feature: a safe effective pattern consists of a figure of a saint in a tabernacle (after the style of the cope orphreys) in the centre and a border which may have formal ornament; but a banner is the one piece of needlework where a naturalistic picture is at all permissible—elsewhere designs must be conventionalized.

BANNER AT CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL. (See list.)

Burses

Burses are generally made to match the vestments ; but this is by no means essential, and they may be of any colour or material, the richer the better. When chalice veils are used, these should harmonize with the burse in design ; but most liturgical scholars deny the lawfulness of any veil except the large offertory veil, which is unlined and has little or no embroidery. The design upon the burse should not be large or heavy, for the burse is only 8 to 9 ins. square. Any suitable ornament may be used : in the mediaeval days the Crucifixion, or other figure subjects, was sometimes embroidered on one side and the other covered with plain silk.

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